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ESSAYS

AND

MARGINALIA.

BY

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.
=

EDITED BY HIS BROTHER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL II.

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EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

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MARGINALIA.

NOTES ON BRITISH POETS.

The following notes are taken, for the most part, from Anderson's Collection of British Poets, in thirteen volumes,—the same in the blank pages of which the rhymed sketches, published among the Poems, were originally written. The remarks on Pope are taken from one of the Author's numerous common-place books, and those on Burns from the margins of Allan Cunningham's edition in eight volumes.

NOTES ON BRITISH POETS.

DRAYTON.

“He wanted neither fire nor imagination, and possessed great command of his abilities. He has written no masques; his personifications of the passions are few; and that allegorical vein which the popularity of Spenser’s works may fairly be supposed to have rendered fashionable, but seldom occurs in him.”—HEADLEY, *quoted in the Life of Drayton.*

WHAT is the Polyolbion but an allegory? and as for personification, I should think the Passions were as capable of it as the Counties. Why it should have been a peculiar commendation to have written no masques, I cannot perceive. Would Milton have been greater had he not written *Comus*? Are not Ben Jonson’s and Daniel’s masques replete with lovely poetry? And does not the masque in general bear the same relationship to the Faery Queen as the Greek Tragedies to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*? Neither Mr. Headley nor Dr. Anderson seem to have been aware that Drayton was a dramatic writer, which it is evident from Collier’s *Annals of the Stage* that he was. Besides the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*.

which Charles Lamb would fain believe his, he is entered in Henslowe's Diary as the author of two plays, neither of which have been discovered; *Mother Redcap*, in which he assisted Antony Munday, 1577, acted by the Lord Admiral's servants; and *William Longsword*, regarding which there is the following entry: "I received forty shillings of Mr. Philip Hinslowe in part of 3*l.* for the playe of Willm. Longsword, to be deliv^d psent wth 2 or three dayes: the xxth of february 1598. Michael Drayton." His signature is a vile scrawl. Drayton was also concerned with Chettle in the famous Wars of Henry I. and the Prince of Wales, and with Antony Munday, Wentworth, Smith, and Henry Chettle, in the *History of Cardinal Wolsey*. It is difficult to conceive how four authors contrived to unite in composing one play. Perhaps they were not all engaged at the same time, but in successive alterations or reformatations.

CAREW.

"Tom Carew was neat, but he had a fault
That would not well stand with a laureat;
His muse was hide-bound, and the issue of 's brain
Was seldom brought forth, but with trouble and pain."

SUCKLING, *quoted in the Life of Carew.*

IF the laureates of either Charles' days had no more to perform than their successors since the Revolution, the most hide-bound muse might have managed the brace of odes. But in the days of "Masque and antique

pageantry" the laureate's office was no sinecure; and as he might often be called upon to produce at short notice, slowness of composition was a real disqualification for the place. Headley's criticism is sad nonsense. Carew, as an amatory poet, is no way to be compared to Habington or Lovelace, to say nothing of the exquisite love-scenes in the dramatic writers. He has none of that tenderness, sometimes, it is true, approaching to silliness, that makes the old madrigals so charming; nor can he compare with Waller in gallantry of compliment. Then what is meant by "the ease without the pedantry of Waller?" Ease and pedantry are mere antipathies; and as for conceit, he has as much as his wit could supply. But he certainly writes like a gentleman, not as a gentleman would now write for ladies' perusal, but as ladies were well content to be addressed in his age; and like most gentlemen writers who do not affect the *à-la-mode* slang, he writes a language which has never become obsolete. Hence his diction has a very modern appearance. His versification is easy and regular, sometimes vigorous, particularly his blank verse in the masque. Some of his more serious pieces, as the lines on Dr. Donne, and his addresses to Jonson and Davenant, display powers of mind much above his anacreontics.

TO T. H., A LADY RESEMBLING MY MISTRESS.

“ Fair copy of my Celia’s face,” &c.

This is really a witty piece of sophistry. Carew and his contemporaries would have made excellent album contributors or annualists. They had a conceit for every possible contingency. A painted flower, a rice-paper butterfly, the day of the month, the lady’s name, would have been quite sufficient to wind up the clock-work of their wits to strange complexities of motion. They differ from modern metrical triflers in this, that the curious machinery of their brains did actually move. The moderns cannot be accused of throwing thought away: even in Moore it is often too obvious that the occasion was devised for the conceit or the simile, and then one pretty thing follows another, with little or no connection; whereas in Carew, Waller, Cowley, &c., the notches of the wheels are fitted with a watch-maker’s nicety. As it has been said that there is a logic of passion, a logic of imagination, a logic of wit, so these industrious idlers have proved that there is a logic of nonsense. Their quaint fancies, like saturated solution of alum dropped upon glass, are regularly crystallised. Their minds were like kaleidoscopes, and formed an endless diversity of figures out of a few glittering fragments of thought. They are perfectly distinct from the impassioned *concetti* of Petrarch and his followers, and from the fancies of Shakspeare and Crashaw, which rather resemble the fantastic imagery of cloud-land. But am I not awkwardly imitating the style I would define?

UPON THE KING'S ILLNESS.

“Sickness, the minister of death, doth lay,” &c.

There is a similar strain of thought in Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Dying*, but as much superior as Jeremy was to Tom. One should not think by these lines that Carew cared much about the king's illness, but this is an unfair and unphilosophic inference. Men who have acquired a certain trick of thought and expression, will continue it under all varieties of feeling. Fancy will “talk as she's most used to do.” A dancing-master would probably turn out his toes were he hastening to his father's death-bed, yet he might be a very good son for all that. Lear's fool can only give fool's comfort, yet he loved his master truly. Mercutio observes, “that his wound is not so wide as a church door, nor so deep as a well,” yet he feels that it is enough. Sir Thomas More died with a jest, and he was a martyr, at least to his own sincerity. Men may joke and quibble till they cannot do otherwise, and yet not have joked away all feeling. To come nearer to the point. Is there any difference in style between Donne's *Sacred Poems* and his wildest love riddles? Are even his *Sermons* quite free from the same taste?

“So, in equal distance lay

Two fair lambs in the wolf's way,

The hungry beast will starve ere choose his prey.”

A dignifying paraphrase of the ass and bundles of

hay. It is certainly as great an improvement as W. W.'s translation of a wash-tub into a turtle-shell;* but it is impossible to keep the donkey out of one's head.

TO BEN JONSON.

UPON OCCASION OF HIS ODE OF DEFIANCE ANNEXED TO HIS PLAY OF
THE NEW INN.

“’Tis true, (Dear Ben,)” &c.

I have seldom read a more kindly, manly, gentlemanly mixture of praise and admonition than this. I hope Ben took it as it was meant, and yet I can well excuse the old man's anger at the dishonour done to the child of his old age, which he might regard at once with a father's and a grandsire's love. Nothing can be crueller than to reproach an aged author with the decay of his powers.

OBSEQUIES TO THE LADY ANNE HAY.

“ I that ne'er more of private sorrow knew,
Than from my pen some froward mistress drew,
And for the public woe had my dull sense
So scared by ever adverse influence
As the invader's sword might have unfelt,
Pierced my dead bosom, yet began to melt.”

You did no such thing; or, if you did, it was as the clouds melt to hailstones. So cold was the atmosphere of your fancy, it froze your “melodious tears”

* I venture to think the substitution of a turtle-shell for a wash-tub no improvement in Wordsworth's beautiful poem. It destroys the verisimilitude—the matter-of-fact character upon which the interest of the story depends.—D. C.

as they fell, into odder shapes than the microscope discovers in snow-flakes. Yet all this impeaches not the kindness of your heart, and I like you far better for your quaint conceited sorrow, than if you had mimicked the language of a real affliction. "The branch of Denny's ancient stem," thus early withered, could not be daughter of that empress of coquettes, more generally known as Countess of Carlisle, who was a Percy, and, it is to be hoped, never a mother.

THE PRIMROSE.

"Ask me why I send you here
This firstling," &c.

This poem, with some slight variations, is also ascribed to Herrick, to whom I should be inclined to give it; first, because Herrick's poems were printed in his lifetime, and probably under his own superintendence, which does not appear to have been the case with Carew's; secondly, the thought and the versification have much more of Herrick than Carew. Herrick was the laureate of flowers and perfumes. His quaintness is sweetened with a fond, child-like tenderness, rarely to be found in the courtly sewer. As the works of the Anthologists of that age were truly fugitive pieces, handed about in MS., or printed, if printed at all, on loose sheets (emblematical of the matter), and not collected till long after the writers' deaths, they were exceedingly apt to be laid at wrong doors. Some were possibly fathered on the

dead, which the living did not care to own. The two Raptures, especially the first, appear to me better and worse than Carew could or would have written. His naughty things are for the most part mere witticisms, such as no doubt passed current even in the court of the first Charles, uttered rather in forgetfulness than in defiance of morality. But there is a sincere voluptuousness in the Rapture, accompanied with a conscious and determined recklessness, not unlike what Byron might have written then, and which savours strongly of Rochester, who never neglects an opportunity of expressing his contempt of honour.

A FANCY.

“Mark how this polished eastern sheet
Doth with our northern tincture meet,” &c.

This fancy informs me of two facts, that India paper was imported, and patches worn, in Charles the First's time.

There is a good deal which a dexterous plagiarist might pilfer and appropriate in these verses. But how could Headley so completely forget (Dr. A. probably knew nothing about it) the sweet and perfume-burning poetry of the previous half century, as to consider Carew an improver either of gallantry or versification? He seems to have made Donne his ideal. He is far smoother; but where is the strength, the boundless wealth of thought, the heart beating beneath its twisted mail?

CÆLUM BRITANNIARUM.—A MASQUE.

This Masque is in a higher strain than anything else that Carew has written. I cannot, indeed, agree with Dr. Anderson, that it is sublime, but it is very animated, well versified, and expressed in manly mother-English. The speeches of Momus are so like the best modern prose, that it is hard to believe they were written in 1633. They are very witty and lifesome, throw a good deal of light on the manners and passages of the times, and, considering that they were spoken in the king's presence, very liberal. Many of the allusions, especially that to Ganymede, would be unintelligible or horrifying to any modest woman of these days; yet they doubtless were uttered not for the gratification of the vulgar, on a public stage (the common plea of critics for the improprieties of dramatists), but at the Court of Whitehall, before the queen and her ladies. We cannot much wonder that old Prynne found a satire on players a convenient vehicle for invective against the Court. The minute description of the getting up of this Masque is very curious and valuable. Inigo Jones must have been a clever machinist. It proves that the passion for pantomime and pageantry is not new to the English stage, and that it did not originate with the galleries. Nothing at Sadler's Wells could be more ridiculous than the dance of monsters representing natural deformity. Yet these Masques were the most intellectual enter-

tainment that ever amused the Court of Britain: a vast deal of poetry was elicited by them, and they were at least as rational as a fancy ball. I reckon it among the bright spots of Charles's character, that he disdained not to take a part in such *divertissemens*. But these relaxations, as they make a beloved monarch truly popular, so do they bring threefold scandal on him that has incurred the displeasure of the many. The French never affected puritanical austerity, yet the levities of Marie Antoinette were blazoned and exaggerated as a *bonne bouche* for Jacobin malice. A popular character, while he is popular, can do no wrong; an unpopular character can do no right. Yet if Charles had not carried his love of theatricals to church—if he had not worn a mask upon the throne, I do not think that his private theatricals, or his devotion to Shakspeare, would have done him much harm.

DANIEL.

—♦—

A FUNERAL POEM

UPON THE DEATH OF THE LATE EARL OF DEVONSHIRE.

“ ——— had'st read
 Man and his breath so well, as made thee *force**
 The less to speak.”

IF strong sense and high morality, expressed in pure, weighty, and considerate language, be enough

* “Force,” *i. e.* care. Thus, in the old pastoral, Harpatus:—

“Corin was her only joy
 Who forced her not a pin.”

to constitute poetry, this memorial is a noble poem, notwithstanding the dead march of the verse, which might have been composed to the knell of muffled bells, the slow rumble of a heavy hearse, and the monotony of a funeral sermon. It is a perfect contrast to Ford's essay on the same occasion, which is the dullest string of conceits, the purest specimen of "the furious tame," that ever issued from the pen of an undeveloped genius. Daniel's allusion to his patron's connection with Lady Rich is manly and delicate. Ford thinks to bully over the matter.

HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WARS.

"Now, Bolinbroke, these miseries here shown
Do much unload thy sin, make thy ill good.
For if thou didst by wrong attain the crown,
'Twas without cries ; it cost but little blood."

This expression savours not of Daniel's usual wisdom. Bolingbroke's usurpation cost all the blood. I am always provoked when I hear of "*the bloodless Revolution* of '88," as if it were not the aftermath of the great rebellion, and as if there had been no blood shed at Killiekrankie, the Boyne, Londonderry, Aghrim, Sherrif Moor, Preston Pans, or Culloden,—not to speak of the noble lives that perished on the scaffold, on the tree, to them not ignominious, and of the bloody wasteful foreign war, of which that dirty business was at least a co-cause.

TO THE LORD HENRY HOWARD.

“Praise, if it be not choice,” &c.

A curious instance how rhymes may be *wasted*, and the poet have all the restraint and trouble, while the reader has none of the effect, except indeed now and then a perplexed suspicion of a *jingle*, in the monotonous blank verse.—S. T. C.*

TO THE LADY MARGARET.

“He that of such a height hath built his mind,” &c.

A noble poem in all respects.—S. T. C.

TO THE LADY LUCY.

“And though books, madam, cannot make this mind,
Which we must bring, apt to be set aright,
Yet do they rectify it in that kind,
And touch it so as that it turns that way
Where judgment lies. And though we cannot find
The certain place of truth, yet do they stay,
And entertain us near about the same,
And give the soul the best delight that may
Encheat it most, and most our spirits enflame
To thoughts of glory and to worthy ends.”

Annex these lines as a note and modest answer

* With reference to these notes of S. T. Coleridge, there appear the following playful remarks on the fly-leaf:—

“Whereas this third (fourth) volume of Anderson’s Poets doth contain certain notes and observations written by the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, of blessed memory, with his own hand, as I, Hartley Coleridge, am ready to make affirmation;

THIS IS TO GIVE NOTICE,

That any person or persons presuming to excise, cut out, purloin, or

to the lines in Milton's "Paradise Regained," in Christ's reply. (Par. Reg. b. iv.)

"However, many books
Wise men have said are wearisome," &c.

"The passion of a distressed man, who, being in a tempest on the sea, and having in his boat two women (of whom he loved the one that disdained him, and scorned the other who affected him), was, by commandment of Neptune, to cast out one of them to appease the rage of the tempest; but which, was referred to his own choice;—

And therefore, since compassion cannot be
Cruel to either, Neptune, take all three.

Resumptio.

But that were to be cruel to all three;
She must be cast away that would not save."

This resumption has done away the chief possible merit of this most [strange] case, by destroying its only possible moral, viz., that for our *lives* we are not answerable, but for our *actions*. If, therefore, life be offered me at the price of a bad action, let it be one or twenty, the murder is with the offerer.

abstract the said notes, or observations, or any thereof, or any line, word, syllable, or letters thereof, shall be prosecuted with the utmost severity of the law.

As witness my hand,

December 21st, 1843.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

Ye antograph-secreting thieves,
Keep scissors from these precious leaves,
And likewise thumbs, profane and greasy,
From pages hallowed by S. T. C."

In the same volume there is a MS. note by R. Southey.—D. C.

I die not only innocent, but virtuous. Better a thousand die than one commit a crime; for of what a *crime* is, it were impiety to pretend to be ignorant; what *death* is, it were presumption to pretend to know.—S. T. C.

BROWNE.

“It (the first book of Britannia’s Pastorals) was ushered into the world by complimentary verses from some of his ingenious and learned friends, among whom were Drayton, Selden, Jonson,” &c.
The Life of Browne.

I HALF, nay, three-quarters, regret that these complimentary verses are not given, though I dare say most of them were bad enough. Anything of Selden’s must have been worth preserving, if it did but show what such a man could not do. To see such names as Drayton, Jonson, Selden, Wither, in company with such heirs of oblivion as Charles Croke and his brother Unton, Francis Dymne, and Augustus Cæsar, of the Inner Temple, is like finding the dear fists (“hand-writing”) and dear, ugly appellatives of old and departed friends, in the album of some Alpine hostel, amid a legion of cits and lords.

Wood says, “Lord Pembroke had great respect for him (Browne), and took him into his family, and that he got wealth and purchased an estate, and that he had a great mind in a little body.”

The time of his death is uncertain, though it probably happened in 1645. Wood says—“In my

researches I find that one William Browne, of Ottery St. Mary, Devon, died in the winter time, 1645; whether the same with the poet I am hitherto ignorant."

For family reasons, I should be glad to know for certain that Browne passed his latter days at Ottery: but William Browne is too common a name to build upon. Of all the poets that Devon has produced, Herrick alone appears to have lived in rustic memory; and no wonder, for though a poet below the mark of Browne, and moreover no true lover of his vicarage, he has identified his verses so completely with the occupations, merry-makings, and courtships of his country neighbours, and has dallied so prettily with the second childhood of their superannuated superstitions, rocking them with pleasant lullabies to the sleep of death, that he may almost be regarded as a type of Burns. And then he was a jolly cavalier, and a parson that mixed mirth with devotion, and in both senses of the word kept holyday. I am, however, right proud that Browne "had a great mind in a little body," and joyful that he got wealth, and purchased an estate. Qu.: Where was his land?

"This is all that is known of Browne, a man who obtained the highest distinction in a learned and poetical age, and to whose memory time has by no means done justice."

Justice indeed! nothing like it. Even our great quoters, our patrons of the illustrious obscure, the admirers of Quarles, Wither, Herrick, rarely give a line of him. I wish I could do him right myself.

BRITANNIA'S PASTORALS.

“This Poem is full of delightful passages. Of all our old Poets he seems to me to have been the most accurate observer of natural imagery. The plan is boyish, but perhaps a work of more promise never appeared.”—R. S. (Robert Southey.)

Browne is one of those poets whom few but children and poets will either like or love. Few writers have apparently had less fear of criticism, or seem to pour forth their fancies with more heartfelt delight. He describes rural objects and pursuits with wonderful minuteness, and abounds in tender, beautiful images, perhaps still further intenerated by the playful, babe-like familiarity of his phrases. His *γνώμαι* too, though not very profound, are often happily expressed; and, trite as they are, derive a new life from the sincerity with which they are uttered. Some of his allegorical personages are finely portrayed, especially Memory, which is almost worthy of Spenser; but there is an incongruity in his allegory, which if Spenser has not wholly avoided, he has at least better disguised. Browne could never have succeeded as an allegorical poet. His very genius was against it.

MILTON.

I do not know whether it has been set down in the *liber conformitatum* by those who consider Milton a type and precursor of Wordsworth, that both were

sons of scribes; for the scrivener of former days, while in name he represented the ancient *γραμματεὺς*, exercised many of the functions of a solicitor; and that each had a brother Christopher, who rose as much above him in public station as he fell short in literary fame.* Kit Milton, however, could not make a royalist or Church of Englandist of John. Both passed their youth in revolutionary times, and neither escaped the infection of republican feelings, though I am far from asserting that Wordsworth ever cast in his lot with those who plotted for change in his own country. Milton, perhaps before he saw how far the change was to go, certainly before he foresaw how it was to end, identified himself too much with the anti-prelatists, who became anti-monarchists, to recede without owning himself to have been in the wrong, the one great self-crucifixion from which the Stoic shrinks. Wordsworth's patriotism made him early anti-Gallican, and the Gallican anti-patriotism of the Whigs, who were also his severest critics, drove him to the side of Pitt's successors, some time before his principles were matured to that ardent veneration for time-hallowed orders and institutions, which constitute him a philosophic Church monarchist. It is hard to guess what Milton would have been in these times. He could have had no sympathy with utilitarian *liberaux* or societarian philanthropists. That, his pride, his poetry, his lofty moral creed forbade. Then, though

* Some indulgence is generally required by an antithesis of this sort; but where there is no competition, there is, properly speaking, no comparison.—D.C.

there was a regicide in England, there was no reign of Terror; though there was a military dictator, there was not a Jacobin despotism to wean him from the hopes of his youth. To the shameless atheistic profligacy of France, England presented no parallel before the Restoration, and the character of Charles the Second and his courtiers was not likely to remove his prejudices against kings and courts. Milton, I conjecture, would not in the nineteenth century have been a Whig, a Radical, or moderate Reformer, a Leaguer, or a Free-trader; but I doubt whether he would ever have accepted the existing hierarchy and aristocracy as an adequate type of the moral and religious aristocracy which he long hoped to realise, and never ceased to consider as the just form of a Christian commonwealth. He would have avoided all collision with authorities, probably have condemned all agitation against authorities; but he would never have shed the rays of his genius on the remains of feudal state and ecclesiastical splendour. He would not have received an honorary degree at either university. The correspondence between Wordsworth and Milton must be sought in their genius; not in the scale of their genius, equal though I deem it to be, nor yet in the kind of their genius, for though they have much in common, each has much that is peculiar; but in their lofty veneration for their genius as an emanation [from], rather than a gift of the Eternal Light; both writing under a sense of sacred duty, duty to God and man, with a regal sense of irresponsibility to any number of

individuals. Wordsworth alone, of all the followers of Milton, had a right to appropriate his "Fit audience may I find, though few." In all others it is as ridiculous as it is insincere, and far more pitiably ludicrous than General Tom Thumb assuming the dress and arms of Napoleon. I may elsewhere pursue the parallel, but this is enough for this present 9th of December, 1847, being Milton's birthday, and a nasty squally night.

PARADISE LOST.—BOOK IV.

—————"had not soon
The Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astræa," &c.

ILIAD.—θ. viii. 69.

Καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα
Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο,
Τρώων θ' ἵπποδάμων, καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων·
Ἐλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβῶν, ῥέπε δ' αἴσιμον ἦμαρ Ἀχαιῶν.
Αἱ μὲν Ἀχαιῶν κῆρες ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ
Ἐξέσθην· Τρώων δὲ, πρὸς οὐρμὸν εὐρὺν ἄερθεν.

I never could admire this hind-counter, cheesemongerly, Newmarket, cock-fighting figment, even in Homer. But Homer's Jupiter has no sanctity to lose. If he were not a cheesemonger, " 't were well if he were so honest a man." Milton ascribes the balance and the weights to the Eternal, the Father of the Only Begotten, and not of Jupiter's innumerable

misbegotten. The image or allegory cannot, I think, be defended by the sublime metaphor of Isaiah, xl. 12: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" First, because Isaiah's expression is metaphorical. Milton, as well as Homer, must be supposed to relate a fact, as real as any other incident in the tale of Troy divine, or diviner Eden. Secondly, because in the prophetic imagery there is an obvious purpose to diminish the mightiest of created things in comparison with the Creator;—in opposition to the heathen, whose supreme God was really Πᾶν,—the universe,—out of, and besides which, they knew no God, and whose brute forces they personified under various fetishes,—brute, human, or inanimate, of which tyrants and robbers, dead or living, were the worst. Nor can Milton derive authority from the Apocalypse, c. vi., where, after the opening of the third seal, the Prophet "beheld a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." Whatever the black horse and his rider may typify (Mess* Brown thinks the equity of Providence, and the reputed equity of Severus), his scales are not put into the hand of Jehovah, and can as little serve Milton's turn, as his proclamation of a measure of wheat for a penny can

* John Brown, Minister of Haddington, author of a Dictionary of the Bible, a copy of which belonged to the author of these Marginalia. It was much read by him, and enriched with MS. annotations after his usual manner. Mess is a title anciently given to Scotch clergymen, jocularly applied to Mr. Brown.

justify those false prophets of plenty whom I need not name. For the Apocalypse is a vision, or series of visions, and, though in many places highly poetical, is not a poem. "Paradise Lost" is a poem, and is not a vision. Still less to the purpose are the scales in which Ezekiel was commanded to weigh and divide his hair. Be it remembered, that in the most poetical of the Prophets (and of the prophet-poets Ezekiel is the least poetical—Daniel is not a poet at all), poetry is but a subordinate object. Therefore, though all their types are no doubt divinely fit for their sacred purpose, many of them are not fit for modern poetry; for they are not beautiful, and are only sublime where they are, in the sacred writings, and by right of their sacred significance. Besides, the sacrificial and ceremonial usages of the ancient Gentiles, no less than of the Jews, dignified and sanctified many utensils and processes, on which Protestant Christianity at least confers neither honour nor holiness. As, for instance, the sheep and ox-butchering, at which the Homeric heroes are so expert. Cowper complained of the difficulty of killing a sheep with dignity in English. When there was a god Sterquilinius, an agricultural poet might be allowed to sing of stercoration, or, as the French authors call it, *amendement*. The cat, the onion, and the beetle, were held sacred in Egypt. The Egyptian poets (but were there any?) might, therefore, write solemn hymns to Tabby, in a different vein from Gray, Southey, or even Wordsworth;—might compare the concentric orbits of the planets,

or, if such had been the creed of Thebes or Memphis, the circles of the heavens, or of Tartarus, or the orders of spirits approaching in concentric orbs to the central monad, to the coats of an onion; and refer to its efficacy "to ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears," in illustration of the effects of a moving appeal of penitence, or of beauty in distress. He might make many mystic allusions to the supposed spontaneous generation of the Scarabæus, or compare it, in respect of its coleopterous armour and cyanean breast-plate, to "a mailed angel on a battle-day," not as a sport of fancy, but with religious seriousness. But it would not be discreet in a Protestant poet of the 19th or even of the 17th century to introduce any of these Egyptian archaisms into a serious, far less a religious, poem. The power of religious associations to exalt even the most repulsive objects is forcibly exemplified by the Cross. One of the most diabolical instruments of human cruelty is become the ornament of diadems, rests glittering on the heaving bosom, once adorned the knightly shield, and is still coveted as a knightly order by some who, perhaps, set little by it in any other point of view. But associations, short of religious, have in their degree a dignifying and beautifying influence: witness the griffins and wyverns, the orles and tressures, the chevrons and gyrons of heraldry, that shine almost as brilliant in the pages of old romance as in the jewel-tinctured window of baronial hall or abbey church. Gules and azure were not only red and blue to the men of the shield and the lance, nor are the chequers

only a draughts-board or an ale-house sign to those whose ancestors bore them to Cressy or Ascalon. The numerous allusions to falconry in Shakspeare are not so much to be attributed to his fondness for a sport which his youthful fortunes hardly permitted him to pursue, as to its aristocratic character. He wrote when nobles and high-born dames were painted with hawks on their hands, and an emperor would not have deemed it beneath his ambition to imitate the chivalric and imperial poet, Frederick II. of Hohenstauffen, who wrote a book "De arte venandi cum avibus." Nor had a noble abbess, Juliana Berners, more recently, thought the subject unbecoming either her sex or her vows, though the clergy had been vainly prohibited hawking by the Councils of Adda, Essaon, and Maçon. In reading Pindar, it is necessary to bear in mind that the victors at the sacred games of Greece were not, in Greek estimation, like the *fancy* of the palmy days of the ring, or the riders against time, who ought to have their whips worn to threads over their own shoulders, and their spurs applied in such a manner as to prevent their riding for one while. A poet should present such images, such acts, such characters, and such costumes as are either essentially grand, beautiful, excellent, or at least pleasing in themselves (which is best), or such as are dignified by the nobler associations of his own age,—recollecting that though he may write for future times, and may be valuable to posterity by recording the peculiarities of his own era, he cannot write for the past, or reinvest

with adventitious splendour the mean and unlovely accidents of outworn antiquity. The Grecian deities need not be exiled from modern poetry. They should not be employed, as Camoens and Voltaire have employed them, as machinery in a Christian story, or in any story, even Greek or Roman, that belongs to accredited history. But for imagery, simile, or allusion they are still good; for their forms are beautiful or terrible. But nothing can be made of the ugly monsters of Syrian, Ægyptian, and Hindoo idolatry. Venus may still be the power of beauty and desire,—Apollo the everlasting life of light and music; but Apis can be nothing but a bull-calf,—and a leek can hardly be poetical even to a Welshman. Southey has, indeed, made a splendid poem founded on the Hindoo mythology; but then he is a most heterodox Brahmin, and has ingeniously disguised the complicated monstrosities of the Hindoo sculptured metaphors. Milton, whose taste rarely misled him, when his classic prejudices did not pervert his judgment, knew better than to depict Satan with horns and tail (though that would have been accordant to the popular belief of his contemporaries), or to make Beelzebub the lord of flies, or to give Moloch a bull's head, though such is supposed to have been the figure of his infanticide idol. To the Egyptian beast-gods he but just alludes. That Milton was much the better for his classic lore it would be absurd to deny. Neither Milton nor Ben Jonson had too much learning, nor had Shakspeare or Burns too little. Each had the portion and the kind of learning best

appointed to feed and clothe their genius,—though Burns certainly read too much twaddling, sentimental trash, the ill effects whereof are visible both in his latter works, letters particularly, and in his life. Milton's Greek allusions are sometimes exquisitely beautiful, especially in his earlier poems, Latin and English. But I cannot help thinking that his direct imitations of the ancients, and his comparison of sacred persons to gods and demi-gods of Homeric and Ovidian fame, are sorely out of place in his two great poems. They are, to use an excellent Greek word, *ἄτοπα*. S. T. C. himself wished that the comparison of Satan baffled by our Saviour, to Antæus squeezed to death by Hercules, when he could not touch the ground, were omitted. Spenser had a right to mingle all creeds, all mythologies, all fancies of all ages and countries. It is as if the wealth of the sea, of all the ships that have sunk since Deucalion, were shown by magic through a crystal ocean. The variety interferes not with such dream-like credence as the "Faery Queen" demands. It is no more offensive than the anachronism which brings King Arthur, and St. George, and Queen Elizabeth, and Lord Grey together, now on the banks of Styx, and now by Mulla's stream. But the characters and incidents of "Paradise Lost" are too real, too awful, and the mode of treatment too matter-of-fact, and, *tant pis*, too doctrinal, to tolerate such eclectic heresies. I may add, too, that the spirit and moral of the poem are too Hebraic to admit of any allusion to fables, which a zealous Hebrew would have deemed it

unlawful to know. The "Faery Queen" makes a winning appeal to the natural good of human nature through the imagination. "Paradise Lost" makes an imperative demand on the faith by which we live. Yet, for weightier reasons than these patches of poetic heathenism, too like the Grecian emblems on Christian monuments, I would warn all young enthusiasts to beware of taking their faith from Milton, or committing the worse error of rejecting the meanings of Scripture, on the supposition that Milton and the Bible are one.

DRYDEN.

IT is a comfort that Dryden occupies more than half this volume, though not more than half of him is really valuable. No writer since Pindar has been tasked with such unworthy drudgery. I should have been inclined to throw overboard much of his compliment, not a word of his satire, and fill up the space with poetical passages from his plays. It is agreeable to see how Rochester in his soberer moments could write, and to compare the characters given of Dorset and Montague with their real merits. But how came Stepney, and Sprat, and King, and Duke, and *id genus omne*, to hold a permanent place among poets? Popular they never were, though as courtiers and lampooners they might be in some measure

fashionable. W. W.'s explanation is not satisfactory. If mere amount of contemporary sale were the criterion, many forgotten writers, not included in any collection, far exceeded them. That they were inserted in the volumes of Anderson and Chalmers was owing to their previous appearance in the list of Dr. Johnson. But this was published a full century after most of them were departed, and when the personal interest of their rank, and the occasional interest of their subject, must have passed away. If, therefore, they continued to be read by the public, it should be *primâ facie* evidence that they possessed some hold on public estimation. But not so. They held their place by prescription, the true conservative principle of right. Their own station in society or their eminence as scholars, their academical honours, and the favour of literary leaders obtained notice for their productions, which were strictly conformable to the then predominant criticism. Dryden, Prior, Addison, and Pope paid court to them while living, and sometimes flattered them when dead. They became, in verity, "The classics of an age that heard of none." They constructed their couplets upon the model of Dryden, and in their stanzas imitated Waller, as an Eton boy follows Virgil in longs, Tibullus in longs and shorts, and Horace in lyrics;—therefore they were classical. It was good taste to praise them: not to admire them, or to admire them less than Spenser or Milton, was to be a Zoilus and a Midas. They, therefore, were placed in the first collections: they were called poets

by Sheil, and it would have been revolutionary to turn them out. For many years the study of our true classics was not only neglected, but absolutely interdicted to all who aimed at the reputation of politeness and good sense. To have admired them as anything but barbarian prodigies would have been heretical, and, what is ten times worse, it would have been odd. It would, I doubt not, have made a prudent father or tutor shake his head most ominously had a young man ventured to prefer Milton to Dryden, and a strait waistcoat would have been provided for the advocate of Quarles or Wither. I have been seriously lectured by grave persons for my own admiration of Wordsworth. A self-elected corporation of aristarchs (an hereditary aristocracy could not have been so bad) had decided that the legitimate succession of poets began with Waller. It is true there were always a few bold assertors of ancient liberty, but they were too few and too wrong-headed to bear up against prescription. Men thought it presumptuous to doubt the wisdom of their ancestors, and were too indolent to examine whether their ancestors' ancestors might not have been yet wiser. We should judge better and dispute less if every one of us thought for himself.

Milton has been censured for saying that Dryden was a good rhymer, but no poet. Now, not to go into the question whether he ever said so at all, we may just consider at what time of Dryden's career Milton could have said this. Milton died in 1674, before Dryden published his *Absalom and Achitophel*, *Religio Laici*, *Medal*, *Hind and Panther*,

or Fables. Apart from his tragedies, the best of which were not then written, what would Dryden be without these works? It seems his heroic stanzas first brought him into notice. Surely, for a man of seven and twenty these verses afford as little promise as need be. Dryden's mind, like Swift's, was of slow growth; but, unlike the poor Dean, he continued to grow in power as long as he lived;—nay, we may almost fancy that his mind was intended for an antediluvian body, and that the septuagenarian poet died prematurely, just when his genius was attaining puberty, so little of age, or even ripeness, appears in his latest productions. He never settled down or cleared. There is a yesty fermentation in everything he put forth. Under his grey hairs he continued intellectually a waxing giant,—a hobble-de-hoy Orion, with all the fervour and restless strength, and somewhat of the rawness and acidity of the teens. The improvement of his later years must be ascribed less to practice in composition than to his enlarged knowledge of mankind. He was a great observer of the town and of the times. He had a learned spirit in human dealing; but he never reaped the harvest of a quiet eye,—never looked inward. He seems to have had no passion but anger: his love, his lust, his admiration were alike factitious, but his scorn and indignation were perfectly sincere. For all else, he viewed things and persons under intellectual, not moral, relations; and perhaps the rant and obscenity of his dramas might, in some measure, arise from his incapability of realising and impersonating his conceptions. To make them any-

thing tangible, he was obliged to exhibit them under strong physical impulses.

“The same year he wrote a copy of verses prefixed to the ‘Poems of John Huddeson,’ London, 12mo, 1650, under this title—*J. Dryden, of Trinity College, to his friend the Author upon his Divine Epigrams.*”

I should like to see these epigrams. The unaccountable gambols of intellect in the divine poetry of that day, are among those phenomena at which, according to one’s humour, one may laugh heartily, or think profoundly.

“The next year (1674), he published ‘The State of Innocence, or the Fall of Man,’ an opera, or rather a tragedy, in heroic rhyme, founded on ‘Paradise Lost.’”

It is reported, I know not on what authority, that he asked Milton’s permission to commit this sacrilege, and that Milton answered, “Yes, he may tag my lines.” Dates make the tale improbable. I hope Milton never heard Dryden’s abomination. Who, indeed, could have had the face to read it to him?

A second part of “Absalom and Achitophel” was written by Tate. It had, perhaps, been to the honour of the English nation if poor Nahum, good-natured, fuddling companion as he was, had only been remembered in the list of laureates. His lolly-

pop adulteration of King Lear, and his, I hope, unintentional travesty of the Psalms, are more discreditable to the English stage and Church than to the poor scribbler himself. Yet his Brutus of Alba has a tang of the older tones of tragedy, and some of his translations have a good vein of English. Still, for the sake of Psalmody, I wish Nahum were even with Elkanah. What a rascally Whig trick of Rowe (worthy to be Nathaniel) to take the Laureate's paltry hundred and butt of sack from poor Tate in his old age, thus forcing him to die broken-hearted in the Mint. For misgovernment, political blindness, ignorance of the public rights, and duties of rulers and subjects, and of the true Christian foundation of liberty and authority, Whig and Tory need not reprove each other. Reflections on the rear-ward nigritude of the kettle proceed with an ill grace from its sable companions of the scullery. Perhaps the Pittite Tories have been more lavish, using the public purse as their peculiar, and taking credit for their generous expenditure of what is not their own. But for personal baseness, huckstering, shuffling, penny-wisdom, selfishness, and hard-heartedness, the Whigs are above all competition.

DRYDEN'S SONS.

The "Quarterly Review" carelessly instances the sons of Dryden, as almost the only poetical sons of poets. Has he forgotten Bernardo and Torquato Tasso? It is, however, pretty remarkable that no

English poet has made a family. It is said, indeed, that there are descendants of Spenser in existence. Genius is certainly not hereditary, though a certain degree of talent sometimes descends,—oftener in the female than the male. Scribbling is very infectious, and authors have a habit of warning their sons against the trade, which is most wise.

“ One of his opinions, though prevalent in his time, will do him no honor in the present age. He put great confidence in the prognostications of judicial astrology.”

Dryden's belief in judicial astrology throws a light upon his character which helps to explain some of the most censured parts of it. It shows him, with much mental scepticism, to have been morally credulous, and anxious for assurance of the future more than reason gives, a temper which might have made a more inward-seeking man a visionary, and perhaps did make him a Catholic.

“ The letter to his sons in Italy — contains an indubitable proof of his religious sincerity.”

I have always thought that the insincerity of Dryden's conversion has been far too lightly and uncharitably taken for granted. The arguments of the Romanists are not easily answered: *me judice*, they are, upon high Church-of-England principles, unanswerable. Why may not a man's convictions chance to coincide with those of his sovereign and benefactor? A true, loyal, Church-and-King man ought to be of the King's religion. Seriously: men are

sometimes charged with apostacy at the moment that they first become honest. I have little doubt that Burke had been an aristocratic Tory in his heart, ever since his judgment was good for anything. Circumstances and connections threw him into the ranks of the opposition, and he gave up to party what was meant for mankind, till the French Revolution roused and frightened him into truth, and he threw off the mask of Whiggism, as Junius Brutus discarded his disguise of idiocy. In like manner, I hold it probable that Dryden had been long inclined to the unreformed Church, and only took courage to declare himself when the prospects of his sect smiled treacherous hope. This hypothesis does not indeed make him quite honest; but it supposes him as honest as nine-tenths of us would be under similar circumstances. Perhaps he was more assured of the goodness than of the truth of Christianity in any form, and deemed the Romanist the most effective as it is certainly the most popular, and the least affected by secular change, the most permeating and independent, and in all human probability the most permanent, as having an establishment unconnected with civil states. At the same time, I cannot think his letter to his son is an indubitable proof of his sincerity. No man with a grain of sense could endure that his son should think him a hypocrite, and most men would have their children to be Christians. Whatever Dryden thought of the popish doctrines, he certainly did not think that they endangered salvation. At worst, he held the Church of Rome as good as any.

“ His prefaces have not, as Dr. Johnson observes, the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other.”

Odd enough that Johnson should have pointed out the very fault of his own style. I think Dryden, next to Paley, the best writer of pedestrian prose, the most difficult style in the world.

“ Dr. Beattie’s comparison of the versification of Dryden and Pope merits particular attention.”

So far as the decision of the world can be considered as final, the Dryden and Pope cause may be said to have received a definitive sentence. Pope is read twenty times as much as Dryden, whose original works, indeed, if we except “ Alexander’s Feast,” are hardly read at all out of the literary class. The decision, I think, is just. Pope is a better poet than Dryden, though I hold Dryden by far the better versifier, and out and out the stronger intellect. But his mind was essentially vulgar. He was neither *φιλάγαθος*, nor *φιλόκαλος*, nor *φιλαληθής* (a lover of goodness, beauty, or truth). He never seems to dwell fondly on a thought, an image, a character, or even a sound, and his apparent zeal for moral, political, critical, or religious positions, is but the artificial heat of a barrister, who can talk himself into a real passion on any cause whatever. His delight is the consciousness and exercise of intellectual power. His energy seemed compounded of the mercenary valour of a Swiss, and an Irishman’s disinterested love of fighting.

Dr. Johnson has spoken admirably of Dryden's distinguishing qualities and faculties, but when he comes to assign him his rank among poets, he betrays not so much a partiality for Dryden, as an utter ignorance of the greatness, an insensibility to the sweetness, a blindness to the grace and beauty of Dryden's predecessors. Perhaps the *lateritiam invenit* refers only to the current literature, and particularly the couplet writings at the era of Dryden's *début*, but even then the assertion will be overstrained. Much more truly might it be said, *auream invenit, lateritiam reliquit*,—he found it gold, and left it pinchbeck; for though this could not be said of his own writings, it is satirically true of general literature influenced by his predominance. No constellation in any horoscope he ever cast had a more malign aspect. Had our poetry at the Restoration been what the French was in the age of Richelieu,—had we possessed no greater poets than Ronsard, Bellay, or Garnier, English literature would have been just as cold and passionless as French serious verse became under the tyranny of Louis XIV., while we should not have acquired the light counterpoise of French elegance and vivid superficiality. We should have been bad second-hand Frenchmen. But, heaven be praised, we had Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton, to say nothing of Ben Jonson, Donne, Fletcher, Cowley, and a hundred others, who could not be shoved aside by any change of fashion or taste. Our national genius had attained that healthy, youthful manhood, which can bear

shocks and indulgences fatal at an earlier, or much later period. At Dryden's death was there one living poet? Hardly one, for Pope was a mere boy. Addison and Congreve were decidedly no poets, whatever their merit as coryphæi, each after their kind, of two species of comedy. I know not whether Tickle had appeared. Prior was the best living writer of verse, and even his claims to the title of poet are very disputable. Dryden was a writer quite in Dr. Johnson's way. His harmony was within the compass of the Doctor's ear; his strong sense and vigorous wit were Johnsonic: his remarks gave Johnson new knowledge, or confirmed his own, and there is no call for aught he had not.

HEROIC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER
CROMWELL.

“ And now 'tis time; for their officious haste,
Who would before have borne him to the sky,
Like eager Romans, as all rites were past,
Did let too soon the sacred eagle fly,” &c.

These stanzas must have been written very soon after Cromwell's death, and probably during the brief protectorate of Richard; else the lines—

“ No civil broils have since his death arose,” &c.

would be too impudently mendacious even for Dryden. The lines certainly are not such as any driveller could have slavered, but they do not indicate genius; and the style in which they are composed is easier than it seems. Davenant appears to be the inventor of our so-called elegiac stanza, which I agree with

Dryden in thinking capable of high majesty. Perhaps no English measure admits of so much real condensation. But still I cannot think it well adapted for narrative; and the licence lately revived, of inosculating the stanzas, should be used sparingly, and never without a full close, and perceptible pause. I never heard of a whale cast ashore just before Nol's death. Stanza xxxv.

ASTRÆA REDUX.

A POEM ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HIS SACRED MAJESTY
CHARLES II. 1660.

“Now with a general peace the world was blest,” &c.

The times in which a young poet could change tune so completely in two years, must have had a dull moral sense; but we should not too hastily conclude that the men were worse than ourselves. In all compliments we ought to consider what the coin really goes for, not its image and superscription. Loyalty and gallantry are not, like patriotism, true love and religion, to be construed literally. Where there is no deception meant or made, there can be no dishonesty, whatever words or signs are used. Still such court language is *mali exempli*. It is an evil fashion, and I am heartily glad that it is no longer tolerated.

There is in this piece a sad waste of memorable lines. It is a hoard of quotation, the better because the best thoughts are rather injured by the connexion in which they are set. Dryden prudently refrains from any direct reflections on Cromwell.

TO HIS SACRED MAJESTY.

A PANEGYRIC ON HIS CORONATION.

The best that can be said of this panegyric is, that it is worthy of the occasion, and that it contains one admirable couplet—

“ No promise can oblige a prince so much
Still to be good, as long to have been such;”

and a great many ingenious advances towards the abyss of unidead vacancy.

The prophecy about “souls of kings unborn,”* was by no means so lucky in its fulfilment as it is curious in its theory of generation. A coronation was not then so very unmeaning a show as it is now. The language of symbols still retained some significance, and many yet attributed a real effect to ceremonials. Charles had not then forfeited the good opinion of the nation. Might not a happier marriage, and legitimate issue, have made him a better man? He had good sense, and good dispositions enough to have mended a worse heart. But Clarendon managed him badly, advised him ill, complied when he ought to have resisted, and was an intolerant high-churchman. He would hardly have stood so high among statesmen even in royalist estimation, had he not been the historian of royalism, and succeeded by ministers whom bigotry itself is ashamed to praise.

* “ A queen near whose chaste womb ordain'd by fate
The souls of kings unborn for bodies wait.”

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR HYDE.

“ While flattering crowds officiously appear,” &c.

This is a wonderful concatenation of thoughts. Dryden borrows all his illustrations from books, sometimes from history, oftener from mythology, and often from the natural or metaphysical philosophy of the time;—hardly ever from visible nature. Not seldom his allusions to history are such as we must look long and narrowly to understand; as, for instance, in the “*Astræa Redux*,” Galba’s adoption of Piso is by no means so well-known an event as to furnish a happy poetical example. Attention is suspended by the effort of memory. Shakspeare has some allusions of the same kind, as that to the Pontic Sea, in “*Othello*;” and to the owl being a baker’s daughter, in “*Hamlet*;” but they are diversified with so many others so natural and graphic, that perhaps they are not very disagreeable. I like Dryden the better for following the bent of his own mind. Any sort of illustrations, however *recherchés* or pedantic, are better than stale common-place naturalities, which show no acquaintance with actual nature.

How false proved the prediction that fortune could do no further injury to Clarendon,* whom I knew not ever to have been a poet.†

* “ You have already wearied Fortune so,
She cannot further be your friend or foe,” &c.

† “ The Muses, who your early courtship boast,” &c.

SATIRE ON THE DUTCH, 1662.

“As needy gallants, in the scrivener’s hands,” &c.

Capital! Pity that it cannot be quoted before ladies. There seems to have been an outcry for a Dutch war, as strong as for a Spanish war in Walpole’s times, with perhaps less justice, with no better policy, and with as unprofitable an issue. Poets are less disgracefully employed when they flatter kings, or king’s mistresses or minions, than when they join in a mobbish halloo for blood and plunder. Yet Dryden and Marvel (who had less excuse, inasmuch as his religion and politics were Dutch enough) set their wits to inflame the passions, by exciting the contempt of the multitude in a cause not national. Commercial wars have the guilt without the glory of ambitious wars. On a mere calculation of profit and loss no trade can be worth fighting for. Thomson, Glover, Lyttelton, even Pope, clubbed their wit and indignation (poor Thomson, indeed, only his dulness) to force Sir Robert into a contest with Spain against his better judgment. Poets are vile politicians—that’s the truth of it. Dryden’s brains never desert him. Perhaps he was never sincere enough to feel his powers oppressed by the feeling of insincerity. His talent never resented the base uses it was made to serve. It was as sharp as trusty, and as unscrupulous as a bravo’s dagger, that never turns its point wherever its master may direct it.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

“When for our sakes your hero you resign’d,” &c.

Dryden had hardly softness of soul to be an adroit flatterer of a lady. Waller far outdid him in this line. John can hardly help laughing outright when he talks of “ten thousand Cupids strong.”

ANNUS MIRABILIS, 1666.

Claudian among the ancients, and Dryden among the moderns, are the only tolerable poets laureate,—the only writers who have given a poetic colouring to contemporary events, without unjustifiably violating the truth of history. The sea-fight in this history is a master-piece of description; yet the fight is forgotten. Poets exaggerate their powers of conferring immortality on historical characters, or perhaps their praise is so lavish that it has lost its value.

AN ESSAY UPON SATIRE.

BY MR. DRYDEN AND THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

The hand of Dryden is but too evident in this lampoon; the more the pity. The Duchess of Portsmouth was not much to blame for getting him cudgelled. A cudgel is the fit reward for a lampooner who could insult a woman, albeit a courtesan and a spy. But was there no curb on the press in those days? If I am not mistaken I have seen a bishop’s *imprimatur* on some very harmless books, grammars, &c. Or

was Charles, with all his absolutism, too sluggish to protect himself and his mistresses from blackguards? Perhaps his sacred majesty might have remembered this [lampoon] when he sent out Mulgrave in a leaky vessel. It is just as likely as the story of his courtship of Anne.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

“In pious times, ere priestcraft did begin,” &c.

This terrible satire first appeared Nov. 17, 1681, while Shaftesbury was in the Tower on a charge of high treason. Such an attack upon a man in such a predicament would now be considered not only cruel, but in effect illegal, or contrary to the spirit of the law; but it had no effect on the grand jury who cast out the Bill. The medal which provoked Dryden's anger was struck on this occasion.

TO THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

“When fashion's rage to cruel exile drove,” &c.

Dryden had surely a very low opinion of female intellect. Whenever he addresses a lady he writes not that sort of Johnsonian nonsense which sounds as if it meant an infinity, not the nonsense in which Cowley and himself indulge, wherein thought “overleaps itself;” but pure, unadulterate, virgin nonsense, honest unpretending nonentity, mere gilt gingerbread. Pope, with more of malice against the sex, certainly at the bottom respected them more. He could talk to a woman as a rational creature.

A LETTER TO SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE.

“To you who live in dull degree,” &c.

Our ancestors seem to have had strange notions of the dulness and bibulosity of the Germans. Chesterfield professed not to know whether there were any books worth reading in the German language; but certainly German literature was at a low ebb in his time. I doubt if the Almaines were greater soakers than other Teutons, Perhaps hard drinking continued obligatory in the petty German courts longer than in others.*

TO MR. SOUTHERN,

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED THE “WIFE’S EXCUSE.”

“Sure there’s a fate in plays, and ’tis in vain,” &c.

It appears from hence that Southern, like Ben Jonson, Dryden himself, and even Shakspeare, (if Pericles were his,) failed in his first attempt on the stage. The English, from the first rudiments of their drama, had a passion for foreign actors, singers, and other exhibitors. As early as the time of Richard the Third there were Austrian and Bavarian minstrels in England; Spanish and Italian names continually occur in the lists of the king’s musicians. There were Italian players in Elizabeth’s time, from whom the hint of extemporal plays and characters of pantaloon, &c., are supposed

* “Then Rhenish rummers went the round,
In bumpers every king is crown’d,” &c.

to have been taken. French players were patronised by Charles I. and his queen. A wild Indian, a Laplander, or a Muscovite,* was always a profitable show. We had lately the Russian horn-band, the Tyrolese family, &c. &c.

DRYDEN'S SONGS.

The fineness of Dryden's ear, and the coarseness of his mind, are very conspicuous in these songs. They deserve to be studied by all who would write for music. Rarely has he admitted a word which could perplex the composer or the singer.

TO SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

"Once I beheld the fairest of her kind," &c.

This is really an excellent epistle, manly commendation founded on just criticism, expressed in language equally fit for verse or prose. Whether Kneller had either genius or inclination to rival Raffaele and Titian in historical painting is another question. I suspect he was better employed in illustrating the real history of England by conveying to us the features of poets and of statesmen, than he could have been by attempting to body forth what he had not seen. Dryden's praises were ample payment for

* "But let a monster Muscovite appear,
He draws a crowded audience all the year."

his picture.* It is an interesting fact that Kneller presented Dryden with Shakspeare's portrait.

ELEONORA.

Preface.—"They who despise the rules of virtue, both in their practice and their morals, will think this a trivial commendation."

The word morals is here used correctly. There are few viler abuses of words than that which makes morality to mean a good life. A bad action is indeed immoral, as it is in the Bible sense unlawful; but neither law nor morals are righteousness.

"Doctor Donne, the greatest wit, though not the greatest poet of our nation," &c.

I cannot think that Donne as a wit was at all to be compared to Butler, who exerted the most extraordinary power of volition over the greatest store and variety of thoughts and allusions of any writer, Rabelais perhaps excepted, that I ever read. But Donne was an impassioned poet—Butler only a profound wit.

Few of Dryden's panegyrical addresses are so pleasing as this. It is a master-piece of style: there is little in it (barring a few querulous expressions) which one is not glad to believe. All the praise it

* "His picture by Kneller," observes Dr. Anderson, in the *Life of Dryden*, "would lead us to suppose that he was graceful in his person; but Kneller was a great mender of nature." On this, H. C. remarks, "Kneller has hit Dryden's mind, if not his features."

contains might be true, and so little is remembered of the parties whom it concerns that few can prove it to be false. But neither poets, nor sculptors, nor painters can erect lasting monuments to any but themselves. The exactest copy of the fairest face, or loveliest soul, becomes in a few years a mere ideal, only commendable as it expresses universal beauty or absolute goodness. It is the decree of Heaven that intellect alone shall combat oblivion. Beauty, ever fleeting and perpetually renewed, does its work—then drops, like the petals of the blossoms, when the fruit is set. Valour and power may achieve a place in history, but where are they when their possessors are gone? Their effects may remain, but they live not in them any more than the fire in the work of the potter. Piety has a real, substantial immortality in heaven: its life is laid up with God; but on earth its record is but a tale. But intellect really exists in its products. Its kingdom is here. The beauty of the picture is an abiding concrete of the painter's art. The Apollo, the Venus, the Laocoon, are not mere matters of history. The genius of Shakspeare does not rest on testimony. It is, and will be while the earth endures. The body of Newton is in the grave—his soul, I trust, with its Father; but his mind is with us still. Hence may we perceive the superiority of intellect to all other gifts of earth; its low subordination beneath the grace which is of heaven.*

* See introduction to the works of Massinger and Ford, page xxii. This is one of the very few instances in which any of the author's marginalia have been worked up into a subsequent composition.

“ Scarcely she knew that she was great or fair,
 Or wise beyond what other women are;
 Or, which is better, knew, but never durst compare.
 For to be conscious of what all admire
 And not be vain, advances virtue higher.”

Most excellent; the true character of Christian humility, which never can consist in error or ignorance. To know whatever of good the Allgiver has bestowed upon us, is fit; but the knowledge should never lead us to invidious comparisons with others, the inventory of whose inward wealth we cannot read. Whatever we have—be it in mind, body, estate, or soul—is given us; our virtues are no more our own making than our faces or abilities. They are but talents, arguments of thankfulness and of duty, not of pride;—snares and stumbling-blocks, when they make us look down upon our neighbours: but it is gross falsehood to deny even to ourselves that we possess them; and a great absurdity to attempt to persuade children that they are uglier, or stupider than they really are. The deception is sure to be found out, and the discovery produces much more vanity than it was intended to prevent. Vanity can only be subdued (for it always exists) by fixing the attention on high and serious objects—by inducing efforts in which all must find their weakness and imperfection. He who aims at little things will be vain, if he succeed; splenetic and envious if he be outdone.

A truly noble poem, perfect in versification, almost

faultless in diction, admirable in sentiment; only objectionable in some too bold allusions to sacred things. It shows that Dryden perfectly knew what Christian virtue is in the idea; to what it may approximate in practice. Though he often wrote nonsense to women, he could write excellent sense of them. The allusion to himself is manly and eloquent.*

ON THE DEATH OF AMYNTAS.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

A sad relapse. Pastoral elegies (good Pan forbid that there should be any on the Ettrick Shepherd), by the sweet and tender fancies of Spenser and young Milton have been piped so sweetly, that I cannot find in my heart to abuse them; but the anti-feminine intellect of Dryden was more unfit for such dainty workmanship than Hercules to spin gossamer. When he deserts the track of hard, knotty thought, and witty ratiocination, he becomes silly without being playful or impassioned. He had so little of the woman in him that he could resemble nothing She, or else I should say that his attempts at tenderness reminded me of a politico-economical blue fondling a poodle.

* "Let this suffice: nor thou, great saint, refuse
This humble tribute of no vulgar muse;
Who not by cares, or wants, or age deprest,
Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast," &c.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST BOOK OF OVID'S
METAMORPHOSES.

“Yet I must say this in reference to Homer, that he is more capable of exciting the manly passions than those of grief and pity.”

Wrong, wrong, twice over. Grief and pity may not be what one should call He, or Cock and Bull passions. One would not paint them with a beard; but they are truly manly, for he must be more or less than man who feels them not. Secondly, Homer is as capable of exciting the pathetic emotions as any writer that ever lived; they are the only passions he ever does excite, though not the only passions he enacts. Who sympathises with the Greeks? What interest has any one in Achilles, that is not derived from his second-sight of his own speedy destruction, and his lion-like fury of sorrow for Patroclus? It is an old remark, that most readers take part with the Trojans. Now as this could hardly be Homer's design (indeed, it is his distinguishing excellence that he is so perfectly undesigning), it can only arise from his superior skill in depicting the tearful passions. In fact, he is by no means a martial poet. He had not the organs of pugnacity. Whatever bird he may have transmigrated into, it certainly was not a gamecock. He presents his combatants vividly before the mind's eye, but he has none of the fighting enthusiasm that glows in the war-songs of the Scandinavians and Celts. There is more military passion in “Chevy Chase” than in the whole “Iliad.” How

much more of the soldier has Æschylus displayed in his 'Ε'πτα and Persians, than appears even in the massacre of the suitors? Yet Homer sympathises with Ulysses more than he ever did with Achilles, Diomed, Ajax, or ever a thick-skinned hero of the set. I really think the French Zoilists were the first to say a word of sense about Homer, after Aristotle, who certainly saw that he was in essence dramatic. His οὐδὲν ἄηθες is the truth. Terrasson, &c., had sense to see what Homer was not, but wanted heart to feel what he was. Dryden's remark on Andromache's* family history is shallow enough. Women, especially, are very apt when once they begin complaining to run over every topic of sorrow, or reproach they can think of, however well-known or often repeated. Besides, John might have been the better for Trunnion's rebuke to Hatchway:—"And what if you have heard it;—there's the stranger. You ha' heard a hundred times, have you?"

ROSCOMMON.

"At Caen he is said by Aubrey to have had some preternatural intelligence of his father's death; but the name of Aubrey cannot recommend any account of that kind to credit in the present age."—
From the Life.

I do not reject all tales of this kind. I do believe

* "Andromache in the midst of her concernment and fright for Hector, runs off her bias to tell him a story of her pedigree and of the lamentable death of her father, her mother, and her seven brothers. The Devil was in Hector if he knew not all this matter as well as she who told it him."

that there is a mysterious sympathy between all nature and all created beings, which sometimes rises above the horizon of consciousness.

“ About this time he began to form a society for refining and fixing the English language. The same excellent design was revived by Swift; and was again defeated by the conflict of parties.”

This is one of the very few objects for which we have not now a society. Such an institution would do more harm than good if indeed it did anything. Every language, while it lives, must grow. No prohibitory laws could prevent importation; but I do not see that the conflict of parties prevents the formation of societies. We should have half-a-dozen if we had one, and the poor old language would be torn to pieces between them. Every word would be whig, tory, or radical, and every election produce a conflagration of grammars and dictionaries. Even spelling-books and primers would grow political, and A B C be blue or yellow. Yet I cannot think that nothing is to be done to preserve our speech from corruption; but it must be done by logic and philosophy,—by clear ideas which are not made up of societarian constitutions, but emanate from individual minds. Societies like the Royal, Geographical, Zoological, &c., may collect facts, make experiments, collate evidence, encourage inquiries,—but they cannot discover laws or principles. A metaphysical, theological, or critical society is an absurdity. A political society is a seditious nuisance, only justifiable by the necessity of

self-defence. The government which tolerates any is bound to tolerate all, so long as they do not violate actual law; but a wise and vigorous government would tolerate none which were not part and parcel of itself. Literary societies are good in so far as they diffuse a taste for literature and promote the friendly intercourse of literary men; but they can neither elicit genius, nor regulate taste. No man can think correctly who does not think for himself and by himself. I do hope England, society-ridden as she is, will never submit to a critical society, exclusive or popular. A society might produce a dictionary; but then the majority must submit to be mere operatives under a master-mind.

TRANSLATION OF THE "ARS POETICA" OF
HORACE.

"Unpolished verses pass with many men," &c.

His "unspotted" lordship has here acted on his own principle—that 'tis much safer to leave out than add, and forborne blanking no less than twelve lines from "Syllaba longa" to "crimine turpi." The lines themselves are sufficiently Horatian. They display the happy nack which Pope probably learnt from the French, and the French as probably caught from Horace of versifying mere prose in a happy and surprising manner, without running into mock-heroic. To animate and personify the iambic and the spondee; to give them not only personality, but rights, privi-

leges, manners; to ascribe to two syllables an amiable spirit of accommodation, tempered with a prudent firmness, knowing where concession ought to stop,— is the work of a most ingenious fancy.

“ Non ita pridem
Tardior ut paulo, graviorque veniret ad aures
Spondæos stabiles in jura paterna recepit
Commodus et patiens, non ut de sede secundâ
Cederet aut quartâ socialiter.”

“ ’Twas but late
To meet the ear with movement more sedate,
And the slow pomp of staid magnific state,
The firm-foot Spondee was admitted free,
To equal rights and confraternity;
Iambus yielded, as a liberal must,
Confest that Spondee’s claims were nought but just,
And shrugged his shoulders, happy to oblige,—
Yet stickled still for ancient privilege.
He would do something for conciliation;
But open all his boroughs—no!—
‘ Two seats, at least, I never will resign;
Second and fourth are mine, and shall be mine.’ ”

But this is not Horace. Roscommon was right in omitting the passage, but wrong in translating Horace so heavily.

OTWAY.

FEW writers have been more injudiciously praised than poor Tom Otway. He has been celebrated for pathetic tenderness, as the poet of pity, for the beauty and softness of his females, while his dramatic skill, and the Jacobin energy of his villains, have been overlooked. Collins probably read his plays with a feeling of his personal afflictions. He fancied

he was pitying Monimia and Belvidera (for surely he could pity no one else!) while he was pitying Otway. Perhaps, too, he recollected some favourite actress, and forgot that the voice and action, and even the simulated tears, of a pretty woman will make anything pathetic. Miss O'Neil, I well remember, made me weep with Belvidera; but she would have done the same had she spoken in an unknown tongue. The voice, the look, and the situation was all,—the words went for nothing. But Otway's plots are not pathetic—they are horrible; and "The Orphan" atrocious. His scenes of sarcasm and defiance are well and dramatically written. He makes his traitors and misanthropes respectable; for where no virtue is supposed, bold villainy always commands respect: but when he means to be tender he is mawkish. He knew nothing of the affections of a virtuous woman. Belvidera is a fond girl in the first week of the honey-moon, not an affectionate wife and mother. Then her delirium is downright nonsense. Lute, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber, are not the objects which even delirium would present under such circumstances. Besides, Jaffier is such a pitiful rascal that he degrades the passion of which he is the object. No play that I know, which is readable at all, gains so much by acting as "Venice Preserved." I do not vividly remember "The Orphan," and I never saw it performed; but my impression is that it is the better composition of the two. But the story is unendurable.

Otway was a man of genius, and, perhaps, the best

tragic writer since the Restoration ; but that is not saying much, for all the rest were weak cattle, or merely poets in dialogue. I speak of those fabricating acting tragedy only. But he was neither "child of the Graces," nor "nurseling of the Loves,"* for he had little grace of any sort, poor fellow, and his loves are manifestly trivial. He was a fierce Jacobin, worse than indifferent to virtue. His restless life of dissipation and want affected his genius, which was not strong enough to carry him far out of himself. Hence he has none of those green, sunny pastoral spots, which appear in the works of George Peele, and Robert Green, men whose conduct and fortune resembled his own. He had not a spark of wit or humour : his comedy is as dull as it is scandalous. His poems are not worth much, but the "Poet's Complaint" is worth reading.

STEPNEY.

I do not cite Stepney as a proof of the futility of public judgment in the assigning of poetic honours ; for there is no proof that Stepney ever enjoyed any reputation for verse above that of a clever Westminster lad. But his admission among poets shows the influence of fashion and position to have had much greater influence at the commencement of the

* "Child of the Graces, nurseling of the Loves,
In houseless beggary poor Otway roves."

From a Poem by Mr. Preston.

18th century than at present. Such a writer as Stepney would not now pass for a poet in any drawing-room, however distinguished his society, or successful his diplomacy. It is not impossible that some of the stingiest productions which procured *éclat* for the Dorsets, Walshes, Dukes and Stepneys, may never have appeared in print at all, or been printed in such perishable forms, that they were not to be recovered when the collections were formed, or have been suppressed by desire of offended parties, or too licentious for any time but that which gave them birth.

PHILIPS.

“In 1703 he published *The Splendid Shilling*. It has the uncommon merit of being an original specimen of burlesque, that has lost nothing by time, the peculiar manners of which it did not like Hudibras represent, and therefore will be longer intelligible than that celebrated poem which is not built on observations of nature.”—*From the Life*.

DER TEUFEL! original of burlesque! longer intelligible than Hudibras! and the “Splendid Shilling” built on observation of nature! To be sure, the want of a shilling is a very natural and a very permanent topic of lamentation, not at all dependent upon peculiar manners; and Philip’s “Shilling,” or brass button, rubbed smooth, and smeared with quicksilver, is worth as much now as ever it was, though it has gone for twenty times its value. But whatever merit it does possess, consists in the light it throws on the

college and Temple life of the times, and the record it contains of the shifts and mishaps of a penniless wit. But, on another score, it is a pleasant proof that a burlesque is not necessarily malicious or irreverent. Philips worshipped Milton, albeit he employed, what he fancied to be, Miltonic phrase, in the hope of raising laughter. But he did not perceive that the language and metre of Milton were just as absurd when applied to an apple * as to a shilling. But it often happens that writers, when they mean to be ridiculous, are only unmeaning, and outdo all ridicule when they mean to be sublime. Sheridan's mock tragedy in the "Critic" is not half so rich a specimen of travestie as his "Pizarro."

WALSH.

WALSH, though no very great things of a poet, at least wrote more like a gentleman than most of the class and age to which he belonged. That he was included in the earlier collections of our poets, may fairly be ascribed to the compliments of Dryden and of Pope, and to his own extensive acquaintance with the literary, fashionable, and political circles. He now keeps his place by prescription. A radical reform is imperiously called for in the parliament of poets. The Gattons, and Old Sarums, and Applebys, will be disfranchised. The influence of peers and ministers shall dispose of seats no longer. The

* Alluding to Philips's poem on Cider.—D.C.

unbought, unintimidated suffrage of fame, shall return a truly representative House of Bards.

Walsh, however, if he possess no great merit, is not without claims to a share in the representation of his country;—for poetic representation includes the past as well as the present and the permanent; and he is of some value as showing the very low estimation in which woman was held, in what has been called a polite and gallant age. There should be a separate collection of such verses, as, without any intrinsic value, illustrate history, politics, or manners.

SMITH.

ON THE LATIN EPITAPH BY MR. ADAMS,
OF CHRIST CHURCH.

IT has been matter of question whether an epitaph should be in a living or a dead language. The composition of most epitaphs is so utterly the reverse of what it ought to be, so discordant with the feelings which nature itself would connect with a grave; the popular productions of this kind are, with a few exceptions, such vile doggerel; and those of higher mark so full of conceit, false thoughts, false sentiment, heathenism, and antithetical adulation, that the fewer church-goers can read them, the better. At all events, it is well that the simple folk who might understand them by the letter, should not be accustomed to associate a church or a churchyard with language which can only escape the imputation of falsehood by the

confession of fiction. Mr. Adams, of Christ Church, probably meant no harm,—meant, in fact, nothing at all, but to record his friendship, and to display his ingenuity by telling, in the most astonishing phrases, that his latinity afforded, that Smith was a clever writer of Latin hexameters, lyrics, and orations; that he had compiled a drama on the classical model, and that he had just translated “Longinus” when he died. I do not accuse Adams, or any other epitaph-writer, of intentional dishonesty, but I do accuse them of unintentional profaneness.

I am apt to suspect that the irregularities of Smith, and of some other scholastic wits, were at first affected for the sake of “amazing the weak minds of the natives:” but, commenced in vanity, they were continued in pride and contempt till they gained the fatal force of habit. Unfortunately the trick is too often suffered to succeed, at least in its first unworthy object of exciting wonder. Had Smith been a regular man, he would hardly have attained a place among the poets of Great Britain. He would probably have written more and better, but he would not have obtained credit for the capacity of doing more than he actually performed.

ON THE RETURN OF KING WILLIAM FROM IRELAND
AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.

“O ingens Heros! O tot defunete periclis.”

Contemporary events, if they must be sung at all, should be sung in English Ballad, or Latin heroics.

Such compositions can at best be only *versus politici*. Generally they are mere husks, the highest merit whereof is a skilful adaptation of ancient phrases to modern use. Yet I would advise the manufacturers of such things to translate or paraphrase such names as Schombergus, Dunkirkus, &c. Boileau objects to the introduction of Clovis and Dagobert, even in vernacular poetry.

A POEM TO MR. JOHN PHILIPS.

Smith would have done wisely had he celebrated Cyder Philips as he has done the Boyne. What is merely ingenious is ever the better as the material is rare and exotic, and the workmanship difficult. Besides, it is better to lie in any language than one's own; and when Rag* sets Philips above Butler, Dryden, and Milton, and compares him to Cervantes, he must have known that he was lying. Yet some facts may be deduced from this memorial, to wit, that one of the later Medici was a cyder-drinker, and that his minister translated some of Philips into Italian blank verse. But it is not a fact that Spenser first introduced the Italian tales or numbers into English. Chaucer had imitated Petrarch and Boccaccio before. So had Surrey. Neither Ariosto nor Tasso were Pisans, and the Spenserian stanza is not of Italian invention.

* Smith went by the name of Captain Rag, from the negligence of his dress.—D. C.

DUKE.

—♦—

TO MR. CREECH ON HIS TRANSLATION OF
LUCRETIUS.

“ Had Providence e'er meant that in despite
Of art and nature such dull clods should write,
Bavius and Mævius had been saved by fate
For Settle and for Shadwell to translate ;
As it so many ages has for thee
Preserved the mighty work that now we see.”

THERE is really more wit in this turn than I have found anywhere in Duke. As a work of skill and toil, Creech's "Lucretius," the notes included, is a great performance ; but he fails in the attempt to convey either the occasional bursts of poetical imagination, or the zeal and strength of conviction, which raise even the minutest details of Lucretius to impassioned eloquence. Lucretius is the sincerest of poetic philosophers.

I cannot say that Mister Duke's verses are the very worst I ever read, for he knew the statute measure of a line, and was not altogether ignorant of syntax. But of all the Bavii that I ever read, he is the most utterly worthless. He would even be better if he were worse. He is not absurd enough to be ridiculous, or mad enough to wonder at. He affords no kind of information as to facts, tastes, manners, or opinions, that is not to be derived from Dryden, from whom his few tolerable lines are palpably imitated, or absolutely stolen. The only thing remarkable about him is the sacrilegious profanity of his adulation, in which he has contrived to

outdo his master. Luckily he lies in little room, but that room would have been better occupied by his namesake, Stephen Duck.

KING.

I HAVE, perhaps, spoken too contemptuously of King in the life of Bentley. He appears to have been a kind-hearted *bon vivant*, probably a deeper drinker than thinker; but there is some curious learning in him, and he helps to form the idea of the times he lived in.

SPRAT.

WARBURTON, who seems to have hated his brethren of the cloth like a Radical or a Quaker, praises Pope for setting Sprat in the van of the small wits, and ridicules him for wishing himself a Westminster scholar, saying he was nothing better than a school-boy to the last, &c. This is hardly just. Sprat was certainly a minnow among the poets, and a conger eel among the time-servers; but he wanted not intellect, and was as little of a boy as any man.

“He atoned for the inconsistencies and errors of his political conduct, by the exemplary dignity and decency of his episcopal and private character.”—*From the Life.*

Dignity and decency, though good things enough in their way, are not all that we require in a bishop, nor is either consistent with gross tergiversation.

HALIFAX.

I LATELY fell in with a mutilated copy of political essays, by Halifax, which do great honour to his abilities as a politician and a prose writer.

I suppose that tradition and the circumstances of the character sufficiently determine that Bufo* was meant for Halifax, or else it might apply as well to any other Mæcenas, who was himself an author. When Pope speaks of his leaving the whole Castalian state to Bufo, he swells like a toad himself, if he meant Halifax. Previous to 1715 (the period of Halifax's death) Pope could scarcely have interest enough to be a patron, even in Parnassus; if any, it must have been through his connection with Harley and St. John, or rather with Swift, who was an useful supporter, and, what is worse, a dangerous enemy. The little man makes a mighty merit of patronising the ex-minister in his misfortunes,—

“ I shun his zenith, court his mild decline;
Thus Somers once and Halifax were mine.”

And in a copy of verses dated 1715, he seems to reproach the ingratitude of the Muses in not having the grace to mourn. According to Warburton, Halifax, when restored to power at the commencement of George the First's reign, offered Pope a pension, unclogged with engagements; but nothing came of it. The offer was renewed by Craggs, who suggested how

* “ Proud as Apollo on his forked hill,
Sat full-blown Bufo, puff'd by every quill.”—POPE.

convenient a chariot would be to the infirm poet. But Pope, for some reason, perhaps a wise one, declined it. Of Craggs, however, he always spoke gratefully ; but he was by no means without a sympathy with popular resentments. The party to which Halifax belonged had become exceedingly odious to the many, and to the rising men. Swift, too, hated them ; and I suspect there is a good deal in Pope that, though Pope's verses, are Swift's passion.

DORSET.

“He had as much wit as his first master, or his contemporaries, Buckingham and Rochester, without the royal want of feeling, the duke's want of principles, or the earl's want of thought.”

From the Life.

A JUSTER character of Dorset were, he had a great deal more prudence than Rochester, a very little more decency, and not a tenth part as much genius. Rochester might have been a great man. Dorset was, and always must have been, a little witling of a lord, rich enough to purchase the praises of poets, who in their turn could afford to praise the talents which they could not envy. His verses are worth reading, chiefly as they show the value of dedicatory and lapidary criticism. Dryden, however, takes care that his panegyric shall be incredible to every one but its object,—to show that he was no fool himself, though he might find it necessary to make a fool of his patron. Prior's dedication, addressed to Dorset's son and successor, is a delicate, skilful, and finely

composed *oraison funèbre*, which seems to be inspired by real gratitude. Pope's epitaph is fulsome, and, which is strange, awkward.

SONG,

WRITTEN AT SEA, IN THE FIRST DUTCH WAR, THE NIGHT BEFORE
THE ENGAGEMENT.

"To all you ladies now at land," &c.

His lordship did right to address this song to the ladies. It is the only thing of his fit for a lady to read, and really pretty; yet if he composed it under the circumstances stated, it says more for his courage than for his piety.

ON THE COUNTESS OF DORCHESTER,

MISTRESS TO KING JAMES II., 1680.

"Tell me, Dorinda, why so gay," &c.

James II. was not king till 1685. Pope has imitated this piece of brutality, as one cur imitates another against a post. James should have protected his mistress from the insults to which his passion exposed her. Well might Sedley "curse the form that pleased a king," when that king was not man enough to prevent her being lampooned. Such filth thrown at a virtuous woman can but offend her nose, but it is the poison of toads to her who has lost the antidote of innocence. This grace of courts, in the most courtly age, could call a king, or at least a king's brother, "royal cully." Dan O'Connell would have

been a perfect gentleman in the latter part of the seventeenth century. But James's connection with Catherine Sedley was punished in rather a more manly way by her father, who was an active promoter of the Revolution which our Church-and-King men admire so much. He is reported to have said, "I am quits with King James: he made my daughter a duchess, and I have made his daughter a queen." Such a man, and such a writer as Sedley, had little right to resent the passion of his sovereign, or the frailty of his child. The heroes of 1680 were not all of them more immaculate than the Destructives of 1832, and were chargeable with an ingratitude of which the latter were not guilty. Had Boswell any other foundation than Dorset's abuse for saying that Catherine Sedley was not handsome?

PARNELL.

—♦—

ANACREONTICS.

"From the towering eagle's plume
 The generous hearts accept their doom;
 Shot by the peacock's painted eye,
 The vain and airy lovers die," &c.

I KNOW not whether the Doctor (Southey) had this in his mind, or, as is more probable, in the unconscious limbo of his memory, whence dreams and unaccountable suggestions issue uncalled, when he wrote his chapter on pens; but it is certainly a variation of the same theme.

ROWE.

“The plan of it (the ‘Fair Penitent’) is borrowed from the ‘Fatal Dowry’ of Massinger.”—*From the Life*.

FOR borrowed read stolen, inasmuch as the loan was never acknowledged. It would be unjust to deny that Rowe has, in some technical points, improved upon Massinger, whose play is ill constructed. The preliminary matter, which Rowe condenses into a brief narrative, occupies far too much space in the “Fatal Dowry,” and does not necessarily prepare the way for the sequel. From the period of Charalois’ marriage, a new interest commences. Beaumelle’s infidelity is but very loosely connected with Charalois’ heroic self-devotion. The circumstance that her seducer is the son of her husband’s enemy, is too slight a link. Neither young Novel nor Beaumelle are characters of sufficient dignity for tragedy. They are merely ridiculous—in fact, farcical; but for this Field, not Massinger, was answerable. But in all else, character, language, passion, moral, the superiority of the elder dramatist is decided. There is grossness of conception in both, much more than even the subject required, but the “Fatal Dowry” is only gross—the “Fair Penitent” is lascivious. Rochfort, Charalois, and Romont, are beings of a far higher race than Sciolto, Altamont, and Horatio. Even Beaumelle and her Dandy are less offensive than Calista and Lothario. To the versification of Rowe, the praise of suavity cannot be denied.

He seems to have been the only dramatist of the second era who wrote blank verse systematically; but his cadences are monotonous and undramatic,—too evidently premeditated. His similes are mere fine writing. Dr. Johnson's estimate is not far amiss, though I know not where or how he improves the understanding. His plays should be seen to be appreciated,—perhaps should have been seen as played by the original actors, when acting did not far recede from poetic reading. I never saw the "Fair Penitent," but I should imagine the most effective scenes to be that in which Horatio accuses Lothario of forging Calista's letter; that in which he accuses Calista of her incontinence; and his quarrel with Altamont.

ADDISON.

It is upon his sacred verses that Addison's sole claim to the name of poet is founded. If we except some passages of his prose, he wrote nothing else in English that approximates to poetry. As a religious bard, he is far inferior to many whose names are heard in the world with surprise or ridicule; not comparable to Quarles, or Watts, or Charles Wesley, or Crashaw. I speak not of Cowper, Heber, Montgomery, and Keble; for their fame is approved of the many. Still, I believe that Addison was a firm believer; a higher merit, at least a greater distinction in his days than in ours. His devotion was sincere, though not very deep or fervent, and it raised him

above himself. Of the ode and hymns, I like the paraphrase on the 23rd Psalm the best, and the more celebrated imitation of the 19th the worst. I cannot away with the "spangles" and the "shining frame." They remind me of tambour-work. Perhaps if I had never read the psalm in prose I might think the verses fine. Dr. Johnson used to repeat them with such enthusiasm that, as one saith, his face became like the face of an angel.

STEELE was cruelly abused in his lifetime, and has never had justice since his death; yet his character, malgre his lack of prudence, and it may be some breaches of integrity which the imprudent rarely escape, seems to have been most amiable, and he had a fine warm English vein of humour. S. T. C. preferred him as an essayist to Addison, but few will accede to that. However ineligible may be the trade of authorship, those who are once fairly in for it cannot do better than stick to it in a business-like way. They seldom mend their circumstances by speculations in trade or politics. Steele, Aaron Hill, Sir Walter Scott, Burns, and Hogg are warning instances of the folly of poets turning farmers or tradesmen. This, however, does not preclude the young poet from choosing a profession, nor does it forbid the tradesman to cultivate literature.

SHEFFIELD.

“A story is told of the danger to which he was intentionally exposed in a leaky vessel, to gratify some resentful jealousy of the king.”—*From the Life.*

STORIES like this of the leaky vessel should never be repeated without citing such authorities as shall enable the reader to judge of their truth or falsehood. When they rest only on vague rumour, or such books as Mrs. Manley’s “Atalantis,” they should not be repeated at all. It says little for the morals of the seventeenth century, that such a tale should be believed on slight evidence.

“As a statesman, he is characterised by a steady attachment to Tory principles of government, which is principally to be ascribed to the personal obligations he was under to the royal family of Stuart.”

What obligations if one of them tried to drown him only for courting his niece? For obligations read connection or attachment. But I believe his Toryism to have been a natural emanation of his Hobbish infidelity, though in this age when infidelity affects democracy, and blackguards affect infidelity, this may sound like a paradox.

“Dubius, sed non improbus vixi,
 Incertus morior, sed inturbatus.
 Humanum est nescire et errare ;
 Christum advencror, Deo confido,
 Omnipotenti, benevolentissimo ;
 Ens entium miserere mei.”*

This epitaph, though not what I would have engraved

* Sheffield’s Epitaph in Westminster Abbey as originally written by himself.

on my tomb, or probably what the present authorities of the Abbey would permit to be inscribed on any tomb, shows more mind than any of Sheffield's verse.

“Of his other poetical pieces, the ‘Essay on Poetry’ is the most distinguished. It is ranked by Addison with Roscommon's ‘Essay on Translated Verse,’ and Pope's ‘Essay on Criticism.’”

As criticism, the three are pretty much on a par ; but who would now think of comparing Sheffield's dull lecture or Roscommon's awkward jingling prose, with the wit and brilliance of Pope's fallacies ? Assuredly, the English of the seventeenth century, at least the latter half of it, and the commencement of the eighteenth, were the stupidest critics in the world. For the French were at least lively, and sometimes acute, though never subtle or profound. Their system was bad, but it was consistent ; and at all events it did produce something worthy the name of art. But even Pope, who improved upon his French models greatly, where men and manners are his theme, in his criticisms did little more than disguise in pointed sentences vague notions, and impracticable expectations. The hollowness of the Anglo-Gallican theory may be evinced by the fact, that its main supporters, Boileau and Pope, never attempted any serious, original composition, to which their rules were applicable. Dryden has doubtless many shrewd and some wise remarks in his prefaces, prologues, &c. ; but his opinions are seldom to be relied on, for we know not when they were sincere. Addison had a finer and more natural taste than either Dryden or Pope, but his critical

creed was irrecoverably tainted with the Gallic heresy. And besides, he was a bigoted Virgilian. I have heard that there are some truths in old Dennis, but I am not acquainted with him. I suspect that there is a good deal in Hurd.*

Wilson is the best critic that Scotland has produced;—nay, that is saying too little. When he is at his best, he is almost the best that Britain has produced.

ELEGY TO THE DUCHESS OF R——.

These blanks and initials are cowardly lampooners, and the more mischievous as the more obscure. They spare no one, and extend the slander to indefinite numbers, like those who would fire grape shot among a multitude for the chance of wounding an obnoxious individual, who may not be there after all. The Elegy accuses every married Duke of R—— of brutality, every Duchess of R—— of lightness. I know not indeed how many Dukes of R. there were when it was written. Richmond, Roxburgh, and Rutland, are the only R Dukes that I remember at present.

“ Thus precious jewels among Indians grow,
Who not their use nor wondrous value know.”

The same thought occurs in [Shakspeare's] Cæsar, and I believe in Othello, though the common reading is Judæan. Tibbald's explanation that “the base

* Of whom, however, I have heard S. T. C. speak contemptuously as “a toad-eater of Warburton.”

Judæan " means Herod, and the pearl, Mariamne, is utterly absurd.

THE VISION,

WRITTEN DURING A SEA VOYAGE, ETC.

" Within the silent shades of soft repose," &c.

This " Vision," besides other and graver faults, has the intolerable defect of not resembling any possible dream or vision at all, no more than the " Spectator's " dream about Public Credit. It does not seem even to have been made out of the imperfect remembrance of a dream, though it probably records a real intrigue, perhaps with the Duchess of R——. The leaky vessel—the *quatuor an septem digitis*—hardly interposed between life and eternity, the ensuing peril of battle did not give a more careful, though perhaps an intenser turn to Sheffield's thoughts. No wonder. Danger does not, of itself, convince of mortality, still less of judgment to come. There must be pain and sickness, an evacuation and abasement of corporal nature, to make man fearful of his lusts.

AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

" Read Homer once, and you can read no more ;
For all books else appear so mean, so poor,
Verse will seem prose."

Yes, such verse as your Grace's. H. N. Coleridge has well observed, that the same class of fastidious wits who in France became Zoilists, in England were the stoutest stickers to Homer. But Boileau led the

way. Had he been a Zoilus, Sheffield, if not Pope, might have been the same. The Duke must have been utterly incapable of Homer, and probably never read him but in Dacier's French declamation and Pope's English Epigram. If he had known anything of Homer, or Virgil either, he could never have praised the absurd Punch — Bossu. The lines, "Read Homer once." &c., look like a translation of some French, or modern Latin Epigram.

Of the class of verse-making Peers to which he belonged Sheffield is one of the best. To the name of poet he had no pretensions. But he was a man of strong sense,—a manly nature, not without heart, though his moral capacities lacked good education. His English is pure and unaffected, his versification respectable, his satire for the most part just. His powers of thought greatly outfathomed Roscommon, Granville, Dorset, or Lyttelton. He has no pastoral mythology, and in his gallantries, if he has not much true tenderness, or moral affection, he writes at least like a man and a gentleman. It is a wonder that Johnson deals so hardly with so firm a Tory. Horace Walpole's opinion is good for nothing. What Sheffield attempted he did well, but his essay proves that he had little perception either of the grandeur or the grace of true poetry.

YALDEN.

As a specimen of the feeble and paraphrastic, of the power of a Yalden to turn sublimity to tawdry insignificance, and the voice of divine lamentation into the squeak of a penny trumpet, it is a pity that the doctor's Paraphrase on the 137th Psalm, ycleped a Pindaric ode, is not to be found in this collection. The parson is not content with blaspheming Pindar—he makes Holy Scripture only not ridiculous, because too dull to laugh at. Then he turns the captives of Judah into rank heathens, talking of “a strange reverse of fate,” and “Zion, the darling of my Muse.” Hopkins and Sternhold have been ridiculed, and I have little patience with Brady and Tate: but when I compare even their versions, bad as they are, and the latter mere job-work, unsanctified by the pious earnestness of the elder, with the paraphrases to be found scattered in various collections, some by higher names than Yalden, I confess the Church might go farther and fare worse. The abomination in question is prefixed to Macqueen's “Essay on the Christian Pilgrim's Conduct;” a book worthy of a better overture.

 HYMN TO DARKNESS.

“Darkness, thou first great parent of us all,” &c.

If this be Yalden's best poem, as Johnson says it is, it is hard to conjecture what induced the great moralist to place him among the four chosen witnesses

to his own taste, whom he recommended to the booksellers to complete the elect of England's poets. Pomfret had at best the merit of pleasing many—the many who liked common-places in easy rhyme. Watts, if not a poet, is, and will be, a name of power with a better class than the admirers of Pomfret's *fadaises*. Blackmore must excite curiosity by the quantity of abuse he sustained; but Yalden cannot rank even among the illustrious obscure. He illumines darkness, not like a star of a glow-worm, but like three farthing rushlights stuck against a board in a strolling playhouse.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

“ Famed wits and beauties share this common fate.”

This epistolary ode was, happily for its subject, anything but a true prognostication. Congreve had no reason to complain of barren bays. I do not know how the theatres paid him, but he was as comfortably placed and pensioned as any wit could reasonably desire. The truth of the matter is, poets may have some ground of complaint against managers and booksellers; it is their inevitable infelicity to receive wages from those who neither do, nor can, nor ought to regard their productions otherwise than as marketable commodities. But poets, as such, have no right to grumble at the public,—no personal right to murmur at the established order of things. They were certainly worse remunerated by the trade in Congreve's time than now; but even then they fared much better than many of their fellow Christians. Had Congreve

got nothing by his Old Bachelor but the profits of his third night, he would probably have received more than the income of many a country vicarage,—certainly quadruple the stipend of many a pious curate. Authorship is a bad trade, not because it is worse paid than other kinds of labour,—for the veriest bookseller's drudge makes more, I say not than an honest journeyman, or day-labourer, or sempstress, but than a man without interest can calculate on doing in the church, army, or navy,—but because the ability to produce anything for which an honourable gentleman would wish to be paid, is not to be perpetuated by habit, or recalled by mere volition. Spenser and Cowley were certainly less fortunate than Waller, Congreve, and some others. But Spenser's long expectation, and the fatal loss of his Irish property, arose from political causes. Cowley was ungratefully treated by rascally royalty; but this had nothing to do with his poetry. Neither Spenser nor Cowley were ever in such abject poverty as Yalden describes.

POPE.*

—♦—

PROLOGUE TO SATIRES.

Ver. 1.—“Shut, shut the door, good John!”

JOHN SEARL, his old and faithful servant, whom he

* The observations on Pope are selected from one of the Author's note-books.

has remembered under that character in his will ;
much to his credit.

Ver. 13.—“Then from the Mint,” &c.

Curious enough that the Mint should become the privileged retreat of poverty. Charles Lamb, in his admirable essay on “Poor Relations,” mentions his awe of a queer old gentleman who used to dine with his father when he could get a day rule, and whom he understood to be an inhabitant of the Mint, where all the money was coined. Of course, he was a poor relation. Charles would have been yet more astonished had the unfortunate kinsman been described as a dweller of the King’s Bench. Mints were once numerous, money being coined in many provincial towns. Were they all privileged? Asylums of this nature have existed in most countries as a defence against the outrage of private vengeance, and a set-off to the cruelty of public law. To pity the criminal and the debtor, to confound prosecution and persecution, may be weak and sickly ; but it is not, as some assert, a novel disease. Rather is it a remnant of old times, when law itself was with the many an unpopular novelty, and neither life nor property were guaranteed by public opinion. Feelings often survive their justifying occasions. That no debtor can be arrested on Sunday, must have made the Christian Sabbath precious to others besides men of rhyme, who took that opportunity to emerge from their hiding-places, and breathe a purer air. I think I have observed some such Sabbath-

day's-journey-men rustivating in the Parks. The prisoners of the new poor-houses have not even this hebdomadal glimpse of liberty.

Ver. 15.—“ Is there a parson much bemused in beer ? ”

Beer does not seem to have been a favourite beverage with Pope ; for he seldom mentions it but in connexion with bad poets. The parson might be Eusden, who, like too many both parsons and poets of that period, was of the faith of Cratinus. The maudlin poetess and rhyming peer were either meant for real personages, or left to be individualised *ad libitum*. Nothing helps a satire to sell better than these obscure personalities, which flatter the reader with a conceit of his own cleverness. There were few counting-houses or attorneys' offices in which the clerk might not have been found ; and doubtless the versifying scribe of “ the house,” or “ the concern,” was proud to be indigitated as the bull's-eye of Pope's random shot. The darkened walls and desperate charcoal may, if dates allow, allude to poor Smart. But, alas ! it may allude to many more. Arthur, we are told in the note, was Arthur Moore, Esq. Fathers were lucky in those days, if Arthur alone was cursed with a giddy son. This Arthur Moore was probably an Irishman ; for in Horner's “ High German Doctor ” he is nicknamed Atty Brogue. I know little about him ; but he was one of Queen Anne's Tories, impeached along with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Prior, &c. This should have withheld Pope

from exposing his family affairs; but very likely he actually had damned Pope's works; and sympathy in politics goes but a little way with poets when the *crimen majestatis* has been committed against their verses. Poor Cornus is said to have been Wortley. I can remember when the blame of every elopement was laid on Byron.

Ver. 45.—“The piece, you think, is incorrect; why, take it,
I'm all submission; what you'd have it, make it.”

Few modern writers, however

“Obliged by hunger, or request of friends,”

are quite so humble as this comes to. They may, indeed, request a sincere opinion,—desire Mr. ——— to point out errors, &c.; but he who takes them at their word had better keep out of their paths, if he have any apprehension of the evil eye.

Ver. 54.—“He'll write a journal, or he'll turn divine.”

There is some literary scandal here, that I do not apprehend.

Who was the Bavius still admitted at one table? Who the bishop to whom Philips seemed a wit? I confess I am not of the bishop's opinion. Philips might not deserve all that Pope has said of him. I know not what, indeed, was meant by “pilfered pastorals.” The pastoralties which made up the pastorals of the last century no man could swear to: you might as well identify a brass shilling worn perfectly smooth.

The rural graces had been so long in the town, that whoever gave them a second-hand new suit, or even six-pennyworth of rouge, might claim the honour of taking them under protection. The "Letter from Copenhagen" is not uninteresting; but its interest is extraneous and accidental. I remember reading it in Aikin's Calendar of Nature. The verses to Miss Pulteney, &c., sound pretty and childlike; but they have no real tenderness or moral grace: the same idle compliment is repeated *ad nauseam*. His political rhymes are not better, nor much worse, than such things generally are. The "Distressed Mother" has a taking title, and is about on the level of stage tragedies.

I know not why Pope omitted the lines in the MS. following.

Ver. 124.—"But, friend, this shape, which you and Curl admire,
Came not from Ammon's son, but from my sire;
And for my head, if you'll the truth excuse,
I had it from my mother, not the Muse.
Happy, if he, in whom these frailties join'd,
Had heir'd as well the virtues of the mind."

In the note whereon, we are informed that Curl "set his head up for a sign,—that his father was crooked, and his mother subject to headaches." Yet, in the Dunciad, the Bible is spoken of as Curl's sign.

Ver. 146.—"Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cooks."

The annotator seems to suppose that the Burnet here meant was the bishop: but there is another Burnet mentioned in the Dunciad, who might be

intended. Perhaps Pope was glad of a hit which, seemingly aimed at the scribbler, might glance upon the prelate. It is awkward to have vulgar namesakes.

Ver. 163.—“ Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibbalds.”

Not often an epithet adopted for the sake of ludicrous rhyme expresses a matter of fact so clearly as that which denominates verbal critics “ribalds.” They usually bestow the most pains on the smuttiest authors and the naughtiest passages, and exhaust the slang vocabulary of Greece and Rome in their mutual vituperations. It might be supposed that they were sowing for themselves garlands of oeymum, of which Pliny certifies, *Cum maledictis et probris serendum ut lætius proveniat*; or that their lucubrations were produced during the Heracleia at Lindus, when it was profane and indecent to utter anything but profaneness and obscenity. But the instances which the annotator produces are very feeble, and rather display the self-importance than the ribaldry of the scholiasts and grammarians.

I am not aware that Bentley, as a critic, indulged much in ribaldry. A little haughty contempt, it may be; but I have not read any part of his animadversions on “Clericus,” or on Hare’s “Terence” and “Phædrus.” As a litigant, he was abusive enough.

Warburton (whom I presume to have been the annotator) had too much learning to skit at Bentley, as Pope has done. He says—“This great man, with

all his faults, deserved to be put into better company." The following words of Cicero describe him not amiss :—

“ Habuit à naturâ genus quoddam acuminis, quod arte limaverat, quod erat in reprehendis verbis versutum et solers ; sed sæpe stomachosum, nonnunquam frigidum, interdum etiam facetum.”

Nothing is more provoking than the vague way of quoting an author or a French writer. Who was “the agreeable French writer of *the fair sex*, that said of somebody,—‘ Rempli de ces défauts qui aident à plaire et dépêchent de servir ? ’ ” It is brought in illustration of Pope’s—

“ So obliging that he ne'er obliged.”

Is it conclusive evidence against Addison, that his step-son, the Earl of Warwick, told Pope, “it was in vain to think of being well with his step-father : that he envied Pope’s genius,” &c. ? Few young blades are very partial to their mothers’ second husbands ; and perhaps Addison took more of the father upon him than was agreeable to a rakish young peer at the hands of a commoner. It is indeed a matter-of-fact charge, that Addison hired Gildon to abuse Pope and his family, and paid him ten guineas for the service. It was probably Warwick’s design to make mischief. But literary friendships are seldom lasting. The quarrel was not very honourable to either side. Warburton’s account of it was doubtless derived from

Pope himself. The rival translations were, perhaps, the occasion,—a mutual dyspathy, irritated by their respective sets, the primary cause of the rupture. Pope had outrageously flattered Addison, and possibly expected to be repaid in kind. It is now of small moment to inquire whether Atticus was or was not the true Addison. The character is representative—a type of a numerous race. In the first impressions were these lines :

“ Who, if two wits on rival themes contest,
Approves of each, but likes the worst the best ;”

alluding to the rival versions of the “ Iliad ” I never read, at least never examined, Tickell’s, which is not likely to be the better, if it be Addison’s ; for Addison was a feeble translator, and, I suspect, but an indifferent Grecian. He rarely, in his criticisms, refers to a Greek author. Even in his analysis of “ Paradise Lost,” the parallel passages are almost all from the Latins. Why Pope should have been shocked at Addison’s advising him to leave the first draught of the “ Rape of the Lock ” alone, because it was a delicious little thing, and *merum sal*, I cannot guess, especially as he is said to have been remarkably accessible to advice, correction, or suggestion. But no man likes, no vain man can endure, no proud man forgive, advice which interferes with any favourite project. Still it was nothing to be shocked at. Addison might sincerely think the Rosicrucian machinery out of its place in a tale of modern fashion. Pope has fitted it exactly to the circumstances. His sylphs float as naturally in artificial essences, as Ariel

in the balmy air of the enchanted island. They are fit to nestle in ringlets that have been twisted with irons—to be the tutelars of hoops and earrings. But exquisitely appropriate as they are to their place—their office—to the very diction and versification of the poem that bestows and illuminates their existence—they do nothing; they influence neither act nor thought; they are not successfully interwoven with the plot. We can see plainly that they were superinduced upon it. Addison might anticipate this, and express his opinion without jealousy. In the remarks on the “Imitation of Horace,” B. ii., E. i., 215,—

“Excuse some courtly stains;
No whiter page than Addison remains,”

the annotator returns to the attack on Addison. But the whole burden of his accusation amounts to this: that when Cato was first produced, he was very anxious that it should not be considered a party play, and was afraid that he might be suspected of designs against the Government if “arise” were not altered to “attend;” whereas, when Anne was gone to her long home, and the Tories were counted enemies of the court, and the Hanoverians were at St. James’s and Downing Street, he was very willing that Cato should be esteemed a sound Whig, and zealous Hanoverian Protestant. All this is very likely, and, as the world goes, very excusable. When, indeed, he talks of his muse, *i. e.*, himself, “Boldly rising, for Britannia’s laws,” and “Engaging great Cato in his country’s cause,” he talks nonsense;—but what

of that? Warburton's assignment of Addison's intellectual rank is better worth consideration :—

“ Mr. A.'s literary character is much mistaken ; he was but an ordinary poet, and worse critic. His verses are heavy, and his judgment of men and women superficial. But in the pleasantry of comic adventures, and in the dignity of moral allegories, he is inimitable. Nature having joined in him, as once before in Lucian (who wanted the other's wisdom to make a right use of it) the sublime of Plato to the humour of Menander.”

The humour of Menander we know nothing about ; but I am disposed to think that Addison is as much underrated as to his humour, as he is absurdly overrated as to his sublimity. The unfavourable part of the estimate is ascribed by Dr. Anderson to J. G. Cooper. I cannot consent that Addison is an ordinary poet. He is not an ordinary poet, but an extraordinarily flat versifier. If ever he approaches to poetry, it is in his prose. His judgment of books is not so much superficial—(for superficial judgment may be right as far as it goes)—as it is wrong-principled. He had a feeling of excellence, but he had no ideas, and was misled by false maxims. But his remarks on men and women in society—his strictures on the morality of behaviour and social life—are acute, and as profound as they should be. Comic adventures are certainly not the constituents of his humour, but minute, unconscious traits of character. With more philosophy and a poetic mind, his humour would have come nearer to the Cervantic than that of any English writer. His religious papers were well meant, but they are very shallow. I confess myself obtuse to the charms of his style. It is, however, pure English. The best use, if not the

highest merit, of the "Tatlers," "Spectators," and "Guardians," consists in the light they throw on the age when they appeared, the more valuable because not intended. They are records, not merely of manners and costumes, but of *mores*, in the Roman sense. They make us better acquainted with what the better part of our *proari* and *proavæ* at the commencement of the last century were, how they looked, and by what rules they lived, than any history, sermon, or satire. They tell us much of city, something of country, life; and as it was their evident design to raise the standard of fashionable morals, they afford pretty decisive proof that the standard was exceedingly low. Addison has monopolised far more than his share of credit in these delightful works, and does not seem to have used Steele well in any respect. Both he and Pope would have been greater and better had they not been the *enfants gâtés* of particular cliques. Both were spoiled by the submission of men who should have been their equals and superiors. Only when they met together, did either encounter an independent equality. The natural result was a good deal of hollow compliment, followed by a great deal of discreditable bickering.

Voltaire seems to have been a great admirer of Pope—as well he might; seeing that Pope had made the English language so spruce in a suit of French fashion. W. cites a MS. letter of Voltaire's, written from England: "I intend to send you two or three poems of Mr. Pope, the best poet of England, and at present, of all the world. I hope you are

acquainted enough with the English tongue to be sensible of all the charms of his works. For my part, I look on his poem called the ‘ Essay on Criticism ’ as superior to the *Ars Poetica* of Horace ; and his ‘ Rape of the Lock ’ is, in my opinion, above the ‘ *Lutrin* ’ of Despreaux. I never saw so amiable an imagination, so gentle graces, so great variety, so much wit, and so refined a knowledge of the world, as in this little performance.” (Oct. 15, 1726.)

Yet even Voltaire was, or pretended to be, scandalised with the description of *Sporus*. What provocation Lord Hervey may have given to incur such uncleanly bespattering, I know not ; but no provocation could justify it. It defiles the bespatterer, whether it hit the object or not. The insinuation contained in the nicknames *Sporus* and *Fanny*, sets Pope in the list of the foulest libellers. Pope’s derelictions were sins against his own genius, and a common injury to the cause of wit. Not that there is much wit in the lampoon upon *Sporus*. Pope’s wrath was more feline than leonine ; he never writes well in a rage,—whereas Dryden’s powers are sublimed by fury. To borrow a sublimely ridiculous comparison of his own, he appears a lion,

“ Roused by the lash of his own stubborn tail.”

The verses in question are bad metre, bad English (in effect, they have no grammar at all), false in thought, and lame in expression. *Hobhouse*, in his Radical days, applied the last couplet to *Canning*—

“ Beauty that shocks you, parts that none can trust,
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.”

In sentences thus balanced, it is naturally to be expected that if one member involve an antithesis, the correspondent member will do the same. Now, "beauty that shocks, and pride that licks the dust," are vile antitheses indeed; but, untrusty parts and creeping wit are no antitheses. There is nothing in the simple conception of parts or talents opposed to treachery; nor is the notion of wit contradictory to that of meanness.* It may be, Pope suspected Hervey of misrepresenting him at court; of breathing—

"The whisper that, to greatness still too near,
Perhaps yet vibrates on his sovereign's ear."

But as George II. professedly hated "brinting and boetry too," and Pope was notoriously connected with Bolingbroke, Atterbury, Swift, Marchmont, Cobham, and, in general, with the old Tories and new country

* The critic's moral sensibility seems here to have imparted a somewhat undue fastidiousness to his literary judgment. Morally considered, the passage is offensive enough,—at once gross and ill-natured, not to say malicious;—but surely it is abundantly witty, and in point of composition, if not quite perfect, yet of very extraordinary merit. Where shall we find more meaning, more keenly expressed, than in the lines—

"Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad?"

Though, perhaps, it would have been still better if the allusion had been to a fact in nature or history, rather than to the fiction of another poet; a proof, by-the-by, of the peculiar estimation in which the "Paradise Lost" must even then have been held. The antitheses in the last couplet are perhaps not quite exact; though in each case there is a certain opposition in sense, as well as in sound; but the poignancy is to be sought in the correspondency of the several parts of the similitude, which is very striking. A worse defect is, that there is a double comparison to the tempter—as a toad, and as a cherub-faced serpent; and the images are at once somewhat alike, and yet inconsistent.—However, it is better to be repelled than attracted by such a specimen of misused power; and the Editor will be well pleased that the reader should feel with his author though he should disagree with himself.—D.C.

party, there needed no whisper to make him unacceptable to a court which he ostentatiously slighted. Or may be, Hervey was, or was supposed to be, the author of the "Letter to a Doctor of Divinity," or the "Verses to the Imitator of Horace," in which Pope's poetry, I suppose, is designated as

"Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure."

If his lordship really reflected on the poet's family or infirmities, Pope's resentment was more than venial; but he should have wreaked it with a due regard to his own dignity and his readers' stomachs. I suspect Lord Hervey to have been a handsome man, and a favourite with the ladies—perhaps a *beau garçon*;—keen aggravations of an offence in the eyes of the ugly, the diminutive, the lass-lorn, and the unfashionable.

Dryden was evidently no favourite with Warburton. In his observations on the oft-quoted distich—

"That not in Fancy's maze he wander'd long,
But stoop'd to truth, and moralised the song,"—

he remarks, "that he (Pope) soon discovered in what his strength lay, and he made the best of that advantage by a sedulous cultivation of his proper talent. For having read Quintilian early, this precept did not escape him: 'Suut hæc duo vitanda prorsus; unum, ne tentes quod effici non potest; alterum, ne ab eo quod quis optime facit, in aliud, cui minus est idoneus, transferas.' It was in this knowledge and cultivation of his genius that he had principally the advantage of his great master, Dryden,

who, by his ‘Mac Flecko,’ his ‘Absalom and Achitophel,’ but chiefly by his Prologues and Epilogues, appears to have had great talents for this species of moral poetry ; but, unluckily, he seemed neither to understand nor attend to it.” Again, with much more justice, in addition to a very shallow note, signed P., and probably Pope’s own writing, in which he speaks of those latter works of Ben Jonson, called by Dryden his ‘dotages,’—“Dryden does indeed call them so, but very undeservedly. The truth is, he was not sufficiently acquainted with the manners of the preceding age to judge of them. Besides, nothing is more inconstant than his characters of his own country poets, nor less reasonable than most of his critical notions ; for he had many occasional ends to serve, and few principles to go upon. This may be said as to the character of his critical works in general, though written with great spirit and vivacity.” I applaud the annotator for taking the part of the children of Ben’s old age, the more because those dotages were rather favourites of S. T. C. As to the inconstancy of Dryden’s judgment, nothing better can be said than has been said by Dr. Trapp, and confirmed by Dr. Johnson :—“*Novimus viri illius maxime non semper accuratissimas esse censuras, nec ad severissimam normam critices exactas ; illo judice, id plerumque optimum est quod præ manibus habet, et in quo nunc occupatur.*” Whatever form of verse or description of poem he is writing—whatever author he is translating—whatever lord, lady, or *bona roba* he is eulogising,—are certain to be most

dignified, most noble, most everything. When he had composed the "Annus Mirabilis," in the elegiac quatrain (which probably owed its temporary popularity to Waller's Panegyric), he tells Sir Robert Howard — "I have chosen to write my poem in quatrains, or stanzas of four, in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other form of verse in use among us; in which I am sure I have your approbation." I do not think him altogether wrong in this judgment. I think the decasyllabic quatrain much more impressive than the couplet, the octo-syllabic, the Alexandrine, the long measure, the anapæstic,—in short, than any rhymed metre whatever, except the Spenserian, which is itself less favourable to condensation of thought. But no stanza shorter than the *ottava rima* can be well adapted to continuous narrative or prolonged discussion; nor can any stanza be really proper for a poem in which the lyric element does not prevail. Johnson is right in maintaining the unsuitableness of the quatrain to that species of elegy of which the characteristic is simplicity and tenuity; but, in truth, it were lost labour to invent a metre fit for a species of composition so la-la and lackadaisical. For mere love verses—indeed, for all verses in which simple tenderness should murmur—the measures of the Scotch songsters seem to me the best, as their love is itself the most natural—neither refined nor corporealised above nor below the level of nature. But love is capable of calling forth high and ardent or profound

and self-searching thoughts—pity armed with the might of indignation—hopes, and wishes, and fears, in which all mankind—all human nature, and its awful interests, have part—speculations not bounded by time and space. All these may be the subject of elegy, and may sound aright in the elegiac stanza. I am not aware that Dryden ever contradicted this preference; but he is supposed to have implicitly withdrawn it, by composing all his subsequent works (his odes, songs, and some of his plays excepted) in the heroic couplet. But the superior facility of the couplet, and his own conscious skill in its construction, sufficiently explain his desertion of the quatrain, without supposing a change of judgment. But Twining has shrewdly pointed out the inconsistency of Dryden's estimates of dramatic and of epic poetry in the notes to the translation of Aristotle's Poetics, note 273. In his "Essay on Dramatic Poetry"—the dialogue, I presume, published in 1668—he says: "Though tragedy be justly preferred before the other"—*i. e.* epic poetry. In his dedication to Virgil's *Æneis*, he declares that "An heroic poem, truly such, is undoubtedly the greatest work which the soul of a man is capable to perform." When Virgil was his theme, all other writers were to be depreciated; but when he had translated a book of Homer, he manifestly inclines the balance to the latter. After all, there is nothing more than natural in this inconstancy. Dryden had little pleasure in any writer—any subject, sacred or profane—except as matter for the exercise of his own intellectual

activity ; and that was to him the best, which called forth the latest and most self-pleasing energies.

The most pleasing, if not the brightest, passage in this long epistle, is that which alludes to Pope's parents,—rendered the more interesting by the fact that his mother died a few weeks after it was finished. The son, disappointed in his wish,

“ To keep awhile one parent from the sky,”

erected a monument in Twickenham church, with this inscription :—

D. O. M.

ALEXANDRO POPE, VIRO INNOCUO, PROBO, PIO,
 QUI VIXIT ANNOS 75, OB. 1717,
 ET EDITHÆ CONJUGI INCULPABILI,
 PIENTISSIMÆ,
 QUÆ VIXIT ANNOS 93, OB. 1733,
 PARENTIBUS BENE MERENTIBUS FILIUS FECIT
 ET SIBI.

Johnson, whose admiration of Pope arose more from insensibility to the merits of others than from any deep intellectual sympathy or moral affection, not only aggravates the real faults of that great little man, but does very scanty justice to his many social and christian virtues. His filial piety was not to be denied ; but the great moralist, who balanced an ultra-fidian credulity in the supernatural with an extraordinary degree of scepticism in things natural and human, retails Pope's account of his own family as if it were at best a very doubtful affair. This is pure ill-nature and ill-manners. The fact I take to be, that Johnson, having a Tory veneration for pedigree, envied Pope his gentle blood, and thought he did not deserve to have an uncle killed for King Charles.

The account, which is signed with Pope's initial, is as follows:—"Mr. P.'s father was of a gentleman's family in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the E. of Downe, whose sole heiress married the E. of Lindsay. His mother was the daughter of W. Turner, Esq., of York. She had three brothers, one of whom was killed, the other died, in the service of King Charles; the eldest following his fortunes, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family."—All this is well, and yet Pope's father might have been a mechanic, a hatter, and even a bankrupt. The truth I believe to have been that he was a respectable tradesman. But sensible people in these days seldom inquire what is a man's blood, though they may be anxious to know something about his early habits and associations. I can, however, well believe that the gentlemen of the press, and such-like vermin, twitted Pope with his origin, the religion of his parents, and even his shape and personal infirmities. Such are the general topics of abuse with the dunces and hirelings of the present day. I wish that Alexander the Little had not contracted some symptoms of the disease of his revilers, which was indeed the epidemic of that age. There are plenty of Budgells, Curls, Duckets, and Moores even now, who are not one whit better than the Curls and Moores of the *Dunciad*; but I will venture to affirm that no man, approximating to the rank of Pope in literature or in society, would degrade himself by answering them so nearly in their own way as

Pope was too often provoked to do,—far less by classing with them innocent distress or real genius. Blackguards, in short, are just what they were at the commencement of the last century; but gentlemen are both multiplied and very greatly improved.

There are many things in this epistle which I do not yet understand; for Pope has hardly a line without an allusion. It was obviously, as he tells us it was, begun many years before its publication, and drawn up by snatches, as the several occasions offered. As might be expected, the joinery is very palpable, and not remarkably ingenious. Pope's thoughts seldom generated each other. Seldom, very seldom, is an idea expounded and articulated through a lengthened passage. The successive couplets either repeat the same conceit or observation in different words, or else are brought together arbitrarily, with no more intrinsic relation, confluence, or mutual modification, than the pebbles of a tessellated pavement. Passages of mere enumeration or specification, of course, are out of the question. I doubt not that it was Pope's general practice to set down every line, half line, or lucky phrase that occurred to him in a book, and either to find or make a place for them when and where he could. Hence he is, of all writers, the best to quote; for the quotation never changes meaning when severed from the context. His best things are milliners' flowers, and have no root. Yet he has much more sincerity than Dryden; but it is the sincerity of the man, not of the poet.

His versification has been over-praised and unjustly depreciated. Nothing, in fact, can be better in its kind. It leaves nothing to wish for; but that is itself a proof that it is not of a very excellent kind,—for whatever is truly excellent involves an idea, and excites a desire of something greater and better than itself; of something that cannot be realised in earthly materials. Still it is not true that Pope is a monotonous or merely a regular versifier. His verses may be read monotonously; but it is by readers who would make no verse at all of Shakspeare or Milton. Hardly two lines consecutive of Pope scan alike. They may, indeed, be reduced to ten syllables; but there is no foot which does not enter into the combination.

IMITATIONS OF HORACE.

Pope's "Imitations of Horace," as indeed he or his editor has confessed, are as unlike Horace as they well can be—I mean in manner and expression; for the accommodations are as pat as they can be made: and I hardly recollect an instance where an allusion, merely Roman, remains in the original costume,—a fault which Dryden frequently commits in his paraphrases, which are neither ancient nor modern. Some strokes of satire hit nothing in Rome, while the majority are exclusively Roman. Johnson, in his "London," is more careful or more lucky, and has much of the rhetorical manner of Juvenal. But Pope is hardly more remote from Homer than from Horace. It is indeed not easy to conceive what was

the effect of Horace's hexameters upon a Roman ear. It could hardly be quite colloquial: this the strong, metrical close of the hexameter must have prevented. The lines could never flow into easy paragraphs, like the quieter parts of Cowper's *Task*; but assuredly it could not resemble the acute-angular, ear-stinging epigrams of Pope. In the lighter passages it might come nearer to the gossiping octo-syllabics of Moore's *Fables*, Cotton's *Visions*, Matthew Green's *Spleen*, and such compositions in the same measure as have not affected humorous rhymes, or sharp turns of expression. The graver parts approach the couplets of Ben Jonson, except that they are not laden with the same weight of meaning. Horace loiters for lack of purpose; Ben pauses with deep consideration; Horace tacks about, like a yacht in a light breeze; Ben rows a deep-freighted vessel against the tide. Pope resembles a steam-boat, repeating the same trip day after day, with different freights and passengers, but for the most part in the same track, and the same time. To vary the metaphor, Pope has crystallised Horace. The likeness to Juvenal, which he claims for his *Imitation*, consists rather in the virus of the satire than the form of its exhibition. Juvenal is a long thunder-storm, peal after peal, growling away, now close at your ear, now far off and within an ace of silence, then rattling over-head again. Pope lets off a series of crackers, matters of mere amusement to all but those they are aimed at. The "*Epistle to Augustus*" is unquestionably the best of the series, though the rest is good in its way.

SWIFT.

THE verses of Swift, though not equal to his prose in grave humour, and upon subjects generally local, often trivial, and not seldom nauseous, are well worthy of an attentive perusal. No writer with whom I am acquainted has conveyed the colloquial familiar of daily life in rhyme with so good an effect, unless indeed it be Prior. He is not prosaic, and yet in his liveliest verses there is not a phrase which would not be admissible in good prose. His odes are about as good as Pindarics generally are. In the first, he imitates Cowley, but without striking success. The ode has been called the most difficult of compositions. Certainly it is that in which failure is most frequent. Wordsworth's Ode on Immortality is decidedly the finest in any language.

 G. WEST.

 —♦—
 ODE.

OCCASIONED BY READING MR. WEST'S TRANSLATION OF PINDAR.
 BY THE REV. DR. JOSEPH WARTON.

DEAR, good-natured Joey!—I daresay he thought this Pindaric very like the real thing. He had sense and scholarship to see (for I have my doubts whether he or any man could hear) that Pindar's odes are regular, and that Horace, when he speaks of *numeris lege solutis*, must refer to the dithyrambics no longer

extant. But he did not see, or chose to forget, that the passionate inspiration, the Hebraic earnestness which he ascribes to Pindar, applies no more to those prize poems which—the more the pity—are all the remaining witness to his fame, than the metrical irregularity. He did and could feel no enthusiasm about Olympic or Nemæan victories. Like modern laureates and makers of installation odes, he takes every occasion, or rather every opportunity, to escape from his task into dark antiquity and general reflection, and it is in his wise, his religious reflections that his main value consists. I do but report the judgment, if not the words, of that revered father who, while yet a young father, bequeathed these volumes to me with a solemn injunction never to part with them but in extremity. Though I do not hold the authority of Johnson very high, in *re metricâ*, I am disposed to agree with him that the strophic and anti-strophic form does not agree well with our language, except perhaps in pieces designed for a musical accompaniment. The practice of Horace proves that he thought it unfit for the Latin. Joey's comparison of smooth rhymes to wax candles which never gutter nor flare, is more in the taste of Cowley's Pindarics than of Pindar's.*

* "As well might ye compare
The glimmerings of a waxen flame,
Emblem of verse, correctly tame,
To his own Etna's sulphur-spouting caves."

AKENSIDE.

“Mr. Brand . . . alleges that a halt which he had in his gait was occasioned,” &c.—*From the Life.*

THERE have been so many lame poets that it is no wonder if a few poets have been lame men. Tyrtæus, Akenside, Scott, Byron, and, I dare say, others. Some have included Shakspeare, but I know not on what authority, except an ambiguous expression in one of his sonnets.

“When he resolved not to be a dissenting minister, he probably did not cease to be a dissenter.”

It is probable enough that Akenside never ceased to dissent, but in none of his works can I discover a trace of the dissenter. Indeed, heterodox as I am, I doubt whether there was ever a dissenter poet, though the Non-conformists have produced a fair proportion of poetry. As far as I know, Keble is the first, — certainly the best Church-of-England poet.* Satire on the Church of Rome does not make a Church-of-England poet, nor abuse of the Church of England a dissenter poet. Cowper may, however, be regarded as a Low-Church poet. The best hymns of Watts, the Westleys, the Olney Hymns, &c., have nothing sectarian. They differ from the rigid orthodox only by being more personal and subjective than episcopal prudentiality would allow, at least in public

* H.C. must have forgotten Herbert.—D.C.

worship. I am woefully ignorant of the early Christian poets. What I have seen of the Catholic hymns, rhythmic or rhyming, makes me desirous of seeing more. Akenside, dissenter or not, could not have derived from modern dissenters that classical Quixotism, that almost heathenish admiration of ancient manners, ancient virtues, ancient patriotism, ancient philosophy, which exposed him to the ridicule of Smollett. Upon certain minds the study of the Greek and Roman writers, and, perhaps yet more, the surpassing beauty of antique art, produced a state of mind as far removed from common sense, though far from so noble and devoted, as that which La Mancha's Knight imbibed from the chivalric romances. A not dissimilar effect was produced in certain sects by the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. They became more Hebrew than either European or Christian. Has not the perusal of the Fathers and Monastics given rise to a similar delusion in our own day? But there is no necessity for any of those *μονομανίαι*,—no need to prohibit either books of chivalry, or of Heathen or Hebrew antiquity; far less would I seem to censure the religious study of Christian divines of any age. It is the exclusive study alone that is morbid and dangerous. Not the reading this or that too much, but reading it so as to leave insufficient time and thought for anything else. But to read any ancient work as it should be read, there is needed a discerning spirit to divide the substance from the phenomenon,—the proper form from the accidental shape,—the shape itself from the drapery; to distinguish

between an arbitrary sign or emblem and an essential correspondence ; above all, to discern the permanent, which is eternal truth and life everlasting, from the positive and conventional, which, however long it seems to last, is the birth of time, and heir of corruption.

DYER.

“I have been told that Akenside . . . said that he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taste by the sale of Dyer’s *Fleece*,” &c.
Dr. Johnson’s Life of Dyer.

DYER and his “Fleece” have since obtained the praise of a poet who beholds beauty and truth with clearer eyes than Akenside, and has recorded his approbation in a sonnet which I cannot help thinking superior to its subject. Dyer was doubtless a poet. He looked at nature for himself, and saw her well ; but he did not possess in any high degree the faculty of making others see a whole,—far less had he the Wordsworthian faculty of revealing more in the objects of sight or hearing than meets the common eye and ear. Yet the *Fleece* would be a beautiful poem, if Dyer had not encumbered himself with the fancied duty of teaching what few not personally interested in the woollen trade care to learn, and what they probably know better than he did. The attempt to give aught of an Arcadian character to shepherd life is utterly defeated by these utilitarian details. The real life of a northern shepherd suggests much poetry ; but with this Dyer does not seem to have been intimate.

THE RUINS OF ROME.

“ Enough of Grongar, and the shady dales,” &c.

This is an eloquent and stately poem, with some striking pictures, strong versification, and manly though somewhat rigid diction. But I cannot conceive a man with an eye so completely reverted as to talk of Rome without an allusion to the greater dominion she exercised after her pagan forces were overthrown. Surely Hildebrand was a greater man than Scipio or Cæsar. Nor is it true that the splendours of ancient Rome were fruits of liberty. They were erected by slaves out of the spoils of aggression.

YOUNG.

“ It is related by Ruffhead, that when he determined on the Church, he addressed himself to Pope, who, in a frolic, advised the diligent perusal of St. Thomas Aquinas.”—*From the Life.*

THIS vulgar joke-anecdote against Thomas Aquinas reminds me of Fielding's observation of Aristotle, that he was not quite so great a blockhead as he was deemed by young gentlemen who had never read his works. It is plain, however, from Young's writings, that he really had formed his mind on the scholastic writers. An edition of the “ Night Thoughts,” with a running commentary from Aquinas and his followers, would perhaps surprise such of our modern critics as can construe Latin.—S. T. C.

GRAY.



ON THE LIFE.

I HAVE heard or read somewhere that Gray, nervously apprehensive of fire, kept a rope-ladder in his rooms, of which some young men of fortune being apprised, set a tub of water under his window, and raised a cry of fire. The poet, descending rapidly, plunged into the aqueous pitfall, and resolved to quit the spot where young men of fortune were perhaps only laughingly admonished for a frolic, for which men of no fortune would and ought to have been expelled. All practical jokes are in bad taste; but I most of all abhor those which play upon the fears of the timid, or, like forged love-letters, work on the affections of the susceptible; while I confess perhaps a too lenient toleration for such tricks as only infringe on the purses of the avaricious, or the dignity of self or official importance. Age and infirmity however should at any rate be held sacred.

 ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

“Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country’s blood.”

Originally, Tully and Cæsar. In neither edition are the lines excellent, though a Milton and a Cromwell become the churchyard of Stoke Poges better than a Tully and a Cæsar. “Inglorious” does not imply

mere negation of glory, any more than "infamous" the negation of fame. They are contraries, not mere negatives. Men as lowly as any in the "country churchyard" have played the part of Cromwells.

ODE FOR MUSIC,

PERFORMED AT THE SENATE-HOUSE AT CAMBRIDGE, AT THE INSTALLATION OF HIS GRACE AUGUSTUS HENRY FITZROY, DUKE OF GRAFTON, CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY.

"Hence, avaunt! ('tis holy ground,)" &c.

S. T. C. and W. W. consider this ode the best, or one of the best, of Gray's compositions. I have myself said that it was too good for the occasion. It is certainly more Pindaric, and more original, than any of his other odes. The versification is very skilfully woven, though ears with short memories may think some of the rhymes too far apart. The historical allusions are cleverly introduced, and just enough is said of each for the purpose. I know very little about the Duke of Grafton, not relying much upon "Junius;" but I doubt whether the venerable Margaret, albeit her own descent was not absolutely clear of bastardy, would look with much of pride or satisfaction on a remote and spurious scion, whose name, Fitzroy, explained the nature of his connection with royalty. Gray owed his professorship to the Duke of Grafton.

I can hardly forgive Dr. Anderson, who treats us so liberally with the Latin no-verses of his com-

patriot and rival classic, Græme, for omitting all the Latin lyrics of Gray. To be sure, he could not construe them. He has also omitted the sonnet to West. And why have we not the epigram on Tophet? which proves that Gray, like his friend Mason, had talents for satire of the first order.

R. WEST.

“Ante omnes morbos importunissima tussis.”

IT goes far to remove the contempt with which I am too apt to regard the art of Latin versification, as taught in our public schools, that its practice has often diverted the pangs of sickness, and the weariness of old age. Johnson turned a prayer into Latin verse when he apprehended that his intellect was departing, and was satisfied of his mental sanity, because he was aware of the defects of the composition. ‘O Μακαρίτης beautifully compared the recurrence of old men to the classical studies of their youth, to the last light of the sun shining on the hill tops over which it arose in the morning. I believe the reference was to the Marquis Wellesley.

Some writers maintain a sort of dubious, twilight existence, from their connection with others of greater name. R. West, though an elegant and promising youth, is one of them. He would have been forgotten had he not been the friend of Gray. Jago would have

no place among poets had he not been a favourite of Shenstone. Kirke White will live by the kindness of Southey. If aught of mine be preserved from oblivion, it will be owing to my bearing the name of Coleridge, and having enjoyed, I fear with less profit than I ought, the acquaintance of Southey and of Wordsworth.—*Nov. 27th, 1843.*

LYTTELTON.

—♦—

ON THE LIFE.

“When weary of fashion and debate, he used very often, with Pitt, to visit his cousin West at Wickham, from whose conversation, it is said, he received that conviction of the truth of Christianity which produced, in 1747, his ‘Dissertation on the Conversion of St. Paul,’—a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer.”

JOHNSON should have said that the conversion of St. Paul, recorded in the Acts, and testified in his Epistles, was an argument for Christianity, to which infidelity could never fabricate a satisfactory answer. The argument itself does appear to me irrefragable, and Paley, in his “*Horæ Paulinæ*,” has made it not stronger, for that is impossible, but clearer; he has brought it in the best possible form before the court of common sense. I cannot say so much for Lyttelton. But Lyttelton lived in an age when Christianity was at a discount; and it was something chivalric for a very fine gentleman, a patriot and minister of state, and a pretty versifier, to appear

as the advocate of so unfashionable a personage as St. Paul.

Dr. Anderson complains that Johnson's estimate of Lyttelton's poetical character is sparing and invidious. It is seldom safe to contradict old Poz when the subject-matter lay within the compass of his common sense and sympathy; and surely Lyttelton's verses are neither above him nor beyond him. He appears to have said quite as much for the genteel and ennobled versifier as truth will warrant;—perhaps as his lordship himself in his maturer years could have believed. Whatever might be the intellectual powers of Lyttelton, it is manifest that they were very lightly tasked in the production of his poetry. He never rhymed with his whole mind,—very seldom with his whole heart. Now, whatever may be thought of reading poetry for amusement, it is certain that good poetry, even of the lighter species, cannot be written for amusement. Not only must there be minute painstaking, such as might suffice a lady to flower a piece of muslin, or paint a humming-bird on rice paper (and yet this is not unnecessary), but there must be an intense, and sincere, and integral *ἐνέργεια* of the whole man; and, what is more difficult, there must be an absolute abstraction and secession of soul, and exclusion of all regards that stand aloof from the main point. Now it were slander against Lyttelton to suppose that he wrote the major part of his verses with any greater earnestness than he might have danced a minuet, or played a game at chess. Some

of his amatory trifles are pretty and tender, and very pleasing, because they were dictated by a real attachment, which led to a happy marriage. The Monody is interesting, because we know that it was suggested by true and honourable grief, notwithstanding the clumsy imitation of Lycidas, and the vile taste of introducing mythology and pastoral allegory into a matter-of-fact memorial of a departed Christian wife. But poetry which derives its principal charm from an anecdote, or extraneous circumstance, cannot be of a very high order. Of the Progress of Love, if it be not blame enough that it is pastoral, it is some discommendation that it is nonsense. "The Soliloquy of a Country Beauty," "Blenheim," the "Epistle to Dr. Ayscough," &c., are the verses of a boy, but not of a boy poet. Johnson was right enough about such *blank* as "Blenheim," yet he would perhaps have been better disposed towards the metre had he better liked the hero. He certainly entertained, at a late period of his life, that prejudice against Marlborough which he derived from his early political associations. I agree with him, that the "Advice to Belinda" is the best of Lyttelton's metrical productions, because, as far as relates to marriage at least, it is good advice, though it indicates a very mean estimate of the capacity of female excellence, and contains expressions which no virtuous woman in these days would tolerate, —which no gentleman would now address to a virtuous woman. But Lyttelton was young when he wrote it, and caught the slang of a vile, degenerate age, to which he was himself morally superior. When he

had truly loved, and found by experience what a good woman really is, he spoke more reverently and more wisely. Advice, however, is seldom poetical; nor does Lyttelton's advice indicate, as Johnson kindly surmises, that any time or labour could have made the author a poet. I never read Lyttelton's "Persian Letters;" but the disguise was not only stolen, but ill-chosen. No Englishman could possibly appear to view England with Persian eyes. All that he says about liberty and patriotism in his verses is sad stuff. He was too polite and too comfortable a gentleman to know anything of the matter. But while I think Johnson just to Lyttelton as a poet, I think him by no means just to his merits as a man. Why should the anxiety of a nobleman to have his book correct, and correctly printed, be called vanity? To be sure, poor authors cannot purchase correctness at such an expense, but that is no reason why rich authors should not. Still more invidious is Johnson's statement, that Lyttelton delighted in mortifying Shenstone by exposing the weak points of the Leasowes. Perhaps Shenstone might say so in a bilious mood, but that is no excuse for those who repeated his words. Truth may be a libel in morals, though it should not be so held in law. I cannot help thinking that a little bit of the radical lurked ^{*}under Johnson's ultra royalism; for he certainly was an ultra royalist, and no more a constitutional tory in the modern sense, than Milton was in the modern sense a radical reformer.

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LLOYD.

ON THE FAME OF ACTORS.

“ Yet, hapless artist ! though thy skill can raise
 The bursting peal of everlasting praise,—
 Though at thy beck Applause delighted stands,
 And lifts, Briareus-like, her hundred hands,—
 Know, Fame awards thee but a partial breath ;
 Not all thy talents brave the stroke of death.”

The Actor.

THIS complaint is not absolutely just. Betterton, Quin, Garrick, Kemble, Siddons, are great names still,—perhaps the greater because those who have never seen them suppose them to have been all that can be desired, and more than can be imagined, of histrionic art. And what more than a name is Apelles, Zeuxis, Praxiteles ? what more to the world in general Michel Angelo ? What but a name is Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, Marlborough ? What else will Wellington be a hundred years hence ? The heavier affliction is that actors, like beauties, are liable to outlive the grounds of their reputation, and to survive—the walking contradiction to their sometime flatterers. But then posterity is sure to conceive of them by the praises bestowed on their palmy state, and set down all the reflections bestowed upon their decline to envy and malice. Thus beauties, once dead and forgotten, receive a new and everlasting lease of loveliness. Who does not imagine Mary on the scaffold as the same enchantress that

maddened poor Chatellar, and made John Knox himself lament that so fair a work of God should be given over to Satan? Yet, by all accounts, she was a shrivelled, gray, and miserable old woman, bent and broken before her time by sorrow,—it is to be feared by remorse likewise. A far greater drawback on the actor's happiness than the brevity of his fame, is the unsatisfactory nature of that fame while it lasts. If applause be given, the pleasure is too violent and intoxicating to be wholesome; if withheld, the disappointed aspirant can derive little consolation from the consciousness of well-deserving,—and he lacks that appeal to futurity which has at least the advantage of never being rejected to the suitor's earthly knowledge. He is, moreover, in art what a demagogue is in politics. He must be popular or nothing. The approbation of the few will not even procure him admittance to the green-room. His highest triumphs contribute little to self-respect, because he knows that they are not obtained from the respect of others. However admired, however caressed by rank, beauty, or fashion, he cannot conceal from himself that all this admiration is very near akin to contempt. He is the guest and the idol of peers and patronesses, because he cannot be their equal. He holds something the same place in society as the guardians of the seraglio in an Oriental court, who are trusted and favoured because they are not considered men. It were greatly to be wished, if the stage is to be tolerated, that the stigma attached to the profession of a player were altogether

done away. Were players respected as other citizens, they would not be less respectable, and would perhaps refuse to appear in any part that was inconsistent with their character as men and as gentlemen, and so effectually purify the stage itself. The man or woman who despises actors, as such, commits an unpardonable offence if ever seen in a theatre.

COOPER.

—♦—
THE VISION OF SHAKSPEARE.

OCTOSYLLABIC METRE.

THIS Vision is a fair, because a good, instance of that over-dressed fashion of language which W. W. has condemned as false poetic diction. It is a sort of cento of the prettiest phrases which the author's memory supplies. The expression is mere drapery,—gold lace, and ribbons, and milliner's flowers,—not the body and sensuous phenomenon of the thought. It is, indeed, genteel finery,—not soiled and tawdry frippery. Cooper's highest praise seems to be that he writes like a gentleman, and this is saying a good deal. He was commendable for varying the monotony of the octosyllabic, which requires the spice of Hudibrastic rhymes to preserve it from somnolence. The *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and a hundred other *delicia*, may seem to contradict this; but these owe their delightful variety to the judicious intermixture of trochees, spondees, and even anapæsts,—a matter of

no small difficulty and delicacy; and even when this is effected, the occasional alternation of the rhymes authorised by Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron is a pleasurable relief. Besides, the wild impassioned lyrical spirit of these writers is quite another thing from the metrical chit-chat of Prior, Lloyd, Swift, &c., in which there is nothing lyrical,—no pervading stream of music, meandering and eddying with every turn and vagary of fancy and feeling. These talkers are apt to be tiresome, if they continue long in one strain. But do what you will, French levities will acquire a specific gravity in English, and taste like champagne in a heel-tap.

P. WHITEHEAD.

—◆—
ON THE IMITATORS OF POPE.

LORD BYRON, in his acute and caustic, but coarse and prejudiced, Letters to Bowles, maintains the superiority of Pope to the naturals, by asserting that Pope's influence and example had made many excellent poets; whereas the followers of Wordsworth, &c., had been wretched drivellers. I do not remember the words, but the sense. The argument would not be absolutely conclusive, even were the premises true. On the other hand, one should conjecture that the excellence which could be successfully imitated by mediocrity could not be excellence of a first-rate order. It is easy to mimic the peculiarities, to adopt

the phrases, to copy the turns, to echo the sentiments of any writer; and the involuntary burlesque of insane admirers shows up an author's weak points better than any intentional parody or travestie. But to compose in the spirit of a great master is quite another affair. To do this there must be, if not an equality, yet a congenieity of genius; or a high dramatic power, capable of assuming a foreign nature and alien modes of seeing, thinking, and feeling. But, in fact, really great minds, though equal, are never alike, and always fail if they attempt to imitate each other. Not that they may not, and do not, influence and modify each other; not that they do not give and receive mutual inspiration; not that they do not often borrow thoughts, and trains of thought, and carry on a profitable barter of expression. But, then, all is digested, assimilated, integrated;—each remains the same distinct and distinguishable integral monad. But the truth is, Pope, though he has had many imitators, has had no successful imitators. Perhaps nothing testifies his merit—certainly nothing perpetuates his fame—more than his immeasurable pre-eminence over all his disciples. Even his versification has never been approached in its peculiar excellences; nor is it well understood at this day, or it would not be called monotonous, nor would so many really monotonous jinglers have passed for correct, orthodox Papists. Writing couplets, each one of which parts in the middle, as if it were made to double up and slip into the pocket like a carpenter's rule, is no more writing like Pope than making lines of lengths

as disproportionate as the speeches of a tragedy, clipped to the satisfaction of a monopolising star, is writing like Pindar. Who has attained to the smooth sweetness and technical perfection of his pastorals, that can boast no other than metrical recommendations? As an essayist, a moralist, an epistolary amonist, in the comic epic, and mock heroic, he has had abundance of followers, but no successful imitators;—rivals are out of the question. It is as absurd to call Goldsmith an imitator of Pope, because he writes decasyllabic distichs, as it would be to call Cowper an imitator of Milton because he uses a measure without rhyme. The imitations of the *Dunciad* would fill many columns in a bibliography, and are little likely to be found elsewhere. Who knows aught of the *Hilliad*, the *Smartiad*, the *Scribleriad*, the *Fribleriad*, the *Baviad*, and the *Mæviad*, though perhaps the last had more of Pope's venom, with less of his dirt, than most of the rest? Where is the *pendant* to the Rape of the Lock? Of the various essays written in imitation of the *Essay on Man*, the most notorious, if not the best reputed, is Wilke's *Essay on Woman*, which excused his expulsion from the House (of Commons); and yet it is as dull a piece of smut and profaneness as any man need be ashamed of having read. But the most direct, professed, and palpable imitators of Pope were Paul Whitehead, Cawthorne, and Barbarossa Brown,—three as worthless writers, the first especially, as ever wasted foolscap. In fact, Pope was not the founder, but head scholar and perfectionator of a

school. He was to Dryden what Virgil was to Homer. But his models were French, not English; and it is always better to imitate foreigners than countrymen. In one way he greatly benefited our literature; but it was in a way the very reverse of Byron's assumption. Aspirants for fame or popularity, possessed of anything like real power, saw that it was in vain to attempt excelling Pope in his own way,—that the cleverest imitation of his manner could only be like modern Latin verses compared to the ancient classics. He was not a banyan, whose suckers derived and communicated strength and beauty; but a yew-tree, in whose shade nothing could grow to maturity. This turned the young mind of England into another track. True poets, like Young and Thomson, opened new fountains on the sacred hill. The higher order of talent recurred to the elder classics of our own tongue, to Italy, or to Greece. Even the devotees of fashion found it easier to imitate the badinage of the later Frenchmen than the satiric declamation of the age of Louis XIV., and left the imitation of Pope to the mere verse-makers, who prided themselves upon writing school-boy-like, after the standard; and to the lower order of satirists, who generally chose topics of temporary scandal, the ephemeral novelty whereof carried off the staleness of their method and the second-handness of their costume. Perhaps Byron, in complimenting the followers of Pope, meant to remunerate Gifford for closing the Quarterly against the many jobations which doubtless were concocted for his

Lordship's benefit by the devout, the decent, and the loyal. I really believe that throughout the Pope controversy he was little more than Gifford's mouthpiece. Perhaps, too, he intended to gratify Rogers and Campbell, for whom he appears to have felt kindly; but neither Rogers nor Campbell are Popeans. They belong to another school—the sentimental, which, let me observe, did not begin with Sterne. Sterne was not by nature a sentimentalist, but an humourist. In his first and best volumes, whatever of sentiment occurs is dramatic,—belongs to the character and situation, not to the author. But finding that his humour was understood by few, while his sentiment was on every tongue, and his sly allusions procured both abuse and purchasers, (the more of the latter, in consequence of the former,) he found it convenient to affect the character which had been thrust upon him, and not only loaded his latter works with a double portion both of sentiment and of obscenity, but, far more mischievously, made a sort of (Solomon's) balm of Gilead,—a dram medicated with honey and cantharides out of the two. At the same time, I acquit him of any worse intention than that of selling his book and setting his reprovers at defiance. Perhaps he was the worse for being invested with a function for which he had no call; but nothing, I believe, was further from his thoughts than the promulgation of a sensual philosophy, or the setting of mere animal emotion in the seat of duty

LOGAN.

PARAPHRASE OF SCRIPTURE.

THE second, fourth, and fifth of these hymns are claimed for Bruce. Except for poor Logan's character, the question is of small importance, for all paraphrases of Scripture fall so immeasurably below the mark as to be absolutely painful to a reader who can really appreciate the original or the authorised translation. In these involuntary travesties, the awful truths of the Bible sound like stale truisms; the imagery—the divine Hebrew imagery—looks like an old piece of embroidery that has been turned so often that no one can tell which was originally the right side. What the author himself supplies is always out of keeping, and the phrases which are truly Scriptural have the air of quotations in a strange tongue. Yet the Scotch paraphrases are better rhyme than Sternhold, and better devotion than Tate and Brady. A church reform ought to begin with Psalmody.

BURNS.

THE (old) Scotch songs (in Allan Cunningham's Edition of Burns) are valuable. They prove that Sawney is a fellow of humour, which has been pertinaciously denied. What he wants is elegance, but he is no more to be blamed for this than a male creature for not giving suck.

“There is a degree of wild irregularity in many of the compositions and fragments which are daily sung by my compeers, the common people,—a certain happy arrangement of old Scotch syllables, and yet, very frequently, nothing, not even rhyme or sameness of jingle, in the ends of the lines. This has made me sometimes imagine that it might be possible for a Scotch poet, with a nice judicious ear, to set compositions to many of our most favourite airs, independent of rhyme altogether.”

This is an experiment I would gladly see fairly tried upon the Psalms. There is no reason why the Psalms should be reduced to metre at all, except for the purposes of congregational psalmody. For all ends of poetry, apart from music, the prayer-book version is abundantly rhythmical. I see no necessity of tagging them with rhyme, though something of assonance should be observed in the terminations.

“According to the reverend Westminster divines, conviction must precede conversion.”—Vol. vi., p. 63.

I think the Westminster divines quite in the wrong. Conversion must precede real conviction, though it may neither precede nor follow assent.

BURNS' ENGLISH PROSE STYLE.

“Equally sincere as fervent,” &c.

Burns' English, though not quite so racy as his Scotch, is generally correct, perhaps the more so because he was obliged to ponder upon it a little.

But in the phrase "equally sincere as fervent," if he has not broken Priscian's head, he has at least boxed his ears. Better were "alike sincere and fervent," or "as sincere as fervent." This, however, is a trifle I need not have noticed. But I cannot help wishing that he had been less fascinated by the sentimental prose of his age. This long paragraph, though printed as prose, is in the worst style of the worst parts of Thomson's Seasons. Indeed, Thomson, fat as he was, became sentimentality better than Burns, for he had not the peasant muscle of Burns' mind.

"You ought therefore to deal more sparingly for the future, in the provincial dialect," &c.—*Letter from Dr. Moore to Burns.*

I much doubt the wisdom of Zeluco's counsels. The best things of Burns would have been much worse if written in English, even had he possessed as pure and copious a vein of English as Wordsworth. Neither can I believe, from aught that Burns has written, that he would have written better with more book-knowledge, or that he would have produced anything worthy of himself of a dramatic or epic cast, even a romantic or historical ballad. But he might have done something in the line of sentiment and reflection more than he has done, had the course of his life made meditation and inward-looking more comfortable. But even in this kind I do not think he would have succeeded in a long sustained poem, requiring architectural construction and proportions.

SCOTCH HUMOUR.

I muse how any man can say that the Scotch, as a people, are deficient in humour. Why, Sawney has a humour of his own so strong and irrepressible, that it broke out all the stronger in spite of worldly thrift, kirk session, cutty stool, and lecturer. Four Universities, and Presbyteries—I know not how many—have not put down the humour of Scotland.

“Blink o’er the burn, sweet Betty.”

Burns himself could not write, no man could write, like the warblings of the old songsters. He did sometimes better, often worse, but never like them.



MARGINALIA.



NOTES ON SHAKSPEARE.

NOTES ON SHAKSPEARE.

FROM STOCKDALE'S EDITION OF THE PLAYS.

ON THE LANGUAGE AND MANNERS OF SHAKSPEARE'S DRAMAS.

“While the partiality of the nation shall wish to secure the language in purity, and while the inhabitants shall continue to admire the manners of their aucestors,” &c.—*Preface to the Second Edition of Stockdale's Shakspeare.*

ONE might have thought it difficult to find false topics of panegyric for Shakspeare; yet Mr. Stockdale (the publisher), twice out of thrice, has contrived to be as near wrong as possible. The partiality of the nation to the purity of the language has not been proved by any sufficient instances. The innovators are to the conservators ten to one. But, be that as it may, not the purity, but the power, of the language is to be found in Shakspeare. He used our kindly vernacular more like his wife than his mother;—not with the despotism of a usurper, but with the authority of a sovereign;—not with the license of a seducer, but with the familiarity of a husband. He does not, indeed, innovate for the mere sake of

novelty, but so long as his phrase expressed his meaning to himself, he cared little whether or not it were authorised by usage, or amenable to grammar. He is not an author to be construed and parsed. In his hands words become like things inspired, possessed with a new, an overmastering soul, which they had not before him, and cannot retain when his magic is not working. In plain fact, the language was not fixed in Shakspeare's day, and he did not fix it. As far as it ever has been fixed, the work was done by the translators of the Bible. Our English Bible is the only well of English undefiled. Shakspeare, though a popular, was not in his day, nor for many many days after, a standard writer. His fame, indeed, was planted in his lifetime, and has continued ever since, growing and spreading its leafy branches, till they overshadow the land; but his reputation as a classic English author is altogether new, and not yet undisputed. Then, as to the manners of our ancestors, it is little that we learn about our ancestors or their manners from Shakspeare,—less than from most of his contemporaries. He has, indeed, ghosts, witches, and fairies; but they are ghosts, witches, fairies of his own invention. He has a tavern, very like a tavern of the present day—except where his wit, humour, philosophy make it to differ. He has many allusions to popular customs and superstitions, but seldom directly dramatises any. His scenes are not laid in the halls or oratories of baronial state: he has little of chivalry—the most in *Troilus and Cressida*, where it is utterly out of time. His music

is neither the minstrel harp, nor the convent bell. He has left costumes to the property-man, and all that belongs to one age more than another, to his commentators. Incidentally, no doubt, Shakspeare does throw light on the manners of his own time, but it is neither his characteristic merit, nor his peculiar value. Ben Jonson, Dekkar, and Heywood have far more historical information.

TEMPEST.

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SHAKSPEARE'S SUPREMACY ON THE STAGE.

The supremacy of Shakspeare over his contemporaries has been even greater on the stage than in the closet. Only one play of Massinger, two of Beaumont and Fletcher, and two at most of Ben Jonson, have been stock pieces for many years. Samuel Pepys, in his Diary, that odd mixture of statesman, churchman, gossip, old woman, and knave, where simplicity of heart blends with simplicity of head, unaccountably mixed up with politic wisdom, mentions seeing the *Tempest*, and remarks that it was the most innocent play he ever beheld!!! It must have been Shakspeare's *Tempest* that he saw, not Dryden's and Davenant's.

Whether Shakspeare were afraid of making even a white wizard too amiable for orthodoxy, I know not; but certainly Prospero is a most tyrannical master, not only to Caliban, the legitimate sovereign

of the isle, but even to the gentle Ariel. There is a beautiful sympathy between the human and the supernatural characters. Miranda bears the same relation to Ariel as Trinculo and Stephano to Caliban.

ARIEL.

As Ariel's presence throughout the play is manifest to none but Prospero, it were an improvement in the acting if this dainty spirit were personated by a voice alone. No human form, however sylph-like, but must belie the words of the invisible and tricky Ariel. The voice, shifting from place to place, now above, now below, now in motion, now pausing, and anon multiplied from all quarters, would have a truly magical effect in scenic representation.

ON THE MASQUE.

There is not much either of meaning or melody in this masque. Prospero, when his spell enforced attendance of the spirits, should have furnished them with smoother couplets and sager discourse. But perhaps it is as good as the masques in which the queen and her ladies performed, and to have made it better would have been disloyal emulation. There are lines in it, too, which smack of the poet. Iris, in her invocation to Ceres, is delightfully agricultural—the second verse is a harvest in itself. The third might have been written on Latrigg before it was ploughed. In announcing herself as at once the

bow and the messenger of Juno, she slips into the common confusion of mythology, which scarce any of the ancients, save Homer, have wholly avoided. Shakspeare manifestly turns the Heathen Deities into the elementary powers, resolving the Greek anthropomorphism into its first principles. Ceres is the earth.

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

This play was a task, and not quite so happy a one as Cowper's. That Queen Bess should have desired to see Falstaff making love proves her to have been, as she was, a gross-minded old baggage. Shakspeare has evaded the difficulty with great skill. He knew that Falstaff could not be in love; and has mixed but a little, a very little *pruritus* with his fortune-hunting courtship. But the Falstaff of the Merry Wives is not the Falstaff of Henry the Fourth. It is a big-bellied impostor, assuming his name and style, or at best it is Falstaff in dotage. The Mrs. Quickly of Windsor is not mine Hostess of the Boar's Head; but she is a very pleasant, busy, good-natured, unprincipled old woman, whom it is impossible to be angry with. Shallow should not have left his seat in Gloucestershire and his magisterial duties. Ford's jealousy is of too serious a complexion for the rest of the play. The merry wives are a delightful pair. Methinks I see them, with their comely middle-aged

visages, their dainty white ruffs and toys, their half witchlike conic hats, their full farthingales, their neat though not over-slim waists, their housewifely keys, their girdles, their sly laughing looks, their apple-red cheeks, their brows, the lines whereon look more like the work of mirth than years. And sweet Anne Page—she is a pretty little creature whom one would like to take on one's knee. And poor Slender, how pathetically he fancies himself into love; how tearfully laughable he is in his disappointment, and how painfully ludicrous in his punctilio; how delightful in his valour! How finely he sets forth his achievement to pretty Anne!—"I have seen Sackerson loose." Othello could not brag more amorously. Parson Hugh is a noble Cambro-Briton, but Doctor Caius is rather so-so. Mine Host of the Garter is evidently a portrait. The plot is rather farcical; but no matter, it is exceedingly diverting. There is one passage which shows Shakspeare to have been a Christian, player though he was—

"Since therein she doth evitate and shun
A thousand irreligious cursed hours,
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her."

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

CHARACTER OF DON JOHN.

There is, alas! but too much nature in this sulky rascal. Men who are inly conscious of being des-

picable take it for granted that all their fellow-creatures despise them, and hate the whole human race by anticipation. Such men there are, who immerse their souls in wilful gloom, and think that all joy insults their sullenness; that beauty is only beautiful to make their deformity the more hideous, and that virtue is virtue purely to spite them.

BENEDICT AND BEATRICE.

It has not, I think, been noted that these trickers unwittingly speak truth. It is evident enough from the foregoing scenes, that Beatrice and Benedict are, without owning it to themselves, mutually in love; and the somewhat clumsy and twice-repeated stratagem is not the real cause of their attachment, but its apparent justification. No modest woman makes game of a man whom she does not like at the bottom.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

This play is one of Shakspeare's few essays at what may be called genteel comedy, and proves that neither genius, wit, humour, nor gentility will serve to produce excellence in that kind. It wants that truth of ideal nature which was Shakspeare's *forte*, and does not present enough of the truth of real life and manners to compensate for the deficiency. The more impassioned scenes are scarcely in place. Tragi-comedy is one thing, comi-tragedy is another.

Where pathos is predominant, it often may derive an increase of power from lighter scenes ; but where the ground-work is comic, it is vain to work in flowers of sombre hue. The tale, too, is improbable, without being romantic. Still it is Shakspeare—delightful in each part, but unsatisfactory in the effect of the whole.

P.S. I never censure Shakspeare without finding reason to eat my words.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

This play was probably one of Shakspeare's earliest efforts, partially retouched at a later period. It has all his wit, much of his poetry, but little or nothing of his profundity. The characters seem like exaggerated copies of real life, not, as in his riper works, impersonal ideas, representative of classes. I think most of Shakspeare's early plays, as this, the Comedy of Errors, Richard the Second, and King John, may be discerned by the frequent and irregular intermixture of rhyme,—the greatest offence, by the way, which he ever committed against the just and universal laws of the drama.

When I wrote this, I knew not that the oldest plays presented on the public stage were all in rhyme or prose, though Gorboduc and some others acted at court, or not at all, had used blank verse. Marlowe was the first improver of this noble metre ;

all before him, and many after, thought it sufficient to write ten syllable lines, not rhyme.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

“Lo, she is one of the confederacy,” &c.—ACT III., SCENE II.

There is a dialogue of Maiden Friendship in the “Two Noble Kinsmen” so like this, that many have ascribed it to Shakspeare. But it was not Shakspeare’s way to emulate himself. The resemblance to this scene is *primâ facie* evidence that it is not Shakspeare’s. It is, besides, quite in the best manner of Fletcher, who, when he was not lazy, generally did his best; said all the good things that could be said on a given subject without much caring whether the occasion justified them or not. Hence Fletcher is much less injured by discerption than Shakspeare. A quoted passage of Fletcher may be thoroughly understood with very little previous explanation. But Shakspeare’s best things are absolutely slandered when separate from the context. In the present case, Emilia’s description of her own affection to Flavia, is a better piece of writing than Helena’s reproach of Hermia; but it is a deliberate piece of good writing, an ornate wax taper, ceremoniously consecrated at the shrine of female friendship; whereas Helena’s speech is the quick combustion of love and anger. Still, it must be confessed, that if Fletcher did write the speech of

Emilia, he has imitated Shakspeare's diction and versification very closely.

P.S. I now am convinced that the scene in the "Two Noble Kinsmen" is Shakspeare's.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

I know not any play of Shakspeare's in which the language is so uniformly unexceptionable as this. It is all poetry, and sweeter poetry was never written. One defect there may be. Perhaps the distress of Hermia and Helena, arising from Puck's blundering application of Love in Idleness, is too serious, too real for so fantastic a source. Yet their altercation is so very, very beautiful, so girlish, so loveable, that one cannot wish it away. The characters might be arranged by a chromatic scale, gradually shading from the thick-skinned Bottom and the rude mechanicals, the absolute old father, the proud and princely Theseus and his warrior bride, to the lusty, high-hearted wooers, and so to the sylph-like maidens, till the line melts away in Titania and her fairy train, who seem as they were made of the moonshine wherein they gambol.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE PLOT OF THE DRAMA.

This play, like King Lear, has been adduced (and by great authority) as an instance of a superstructure

of fine nature built on a foundation of mere impossibility. That such a bond as Antonio's could ever have stood good in law, I will not assert; but the ferocious powers given to creditors against debtors in the first ages of European commerce, suffice to give dramatic credibility to the tale. It was probably accredited as a fact in Shakspeare's time. But is it not within the prerogative of a poet to display the odiousness of a passion by a magnified picture? May not many Shylocks learn from Shakspeare's what a crocodile's egg they are warming in their bosom, though happily our climate may never allow it to produce anything bigger than a venomous newt? He that hateth his brother is a murderer. We should never know the evil of sin if it were not sometimes permitted to enlarge itself in effects which the healthy atmosphere of legal society stifles.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

I should much like to peruse Lodge's *Rosalind*, published in 1590, from whence Shakspeare derived not only the story, but, some say, certain thoughts and phrases of *As You Like It*, to know how far Lodge is answerable for the manifold improbabilities of the plot, and what share he may claim in the more numerous beauties of the poetry, the characters, and the fine out-of-doors forest feeling which makes

this play perhaps the sweetest of all romantic dramas. Jacques, old Adam, and the Clown are Shakspeare's own, and true Shakspeare they are. In a more regular and serious composition, it might be objected that Jacques is a supernumerary; he does nothing; he is *κηδεύτης ἄπρακτος*. But such criticism is impertinent in Arden. Rosalind is not a very dutiful daughter, but her neglecting so long to make herself known to her father, though not quite proper, is natural enough. She cannot but be aware that in her disguise she is acting a perilous and not very delicate part, which yet is so delightful, that she cannot prevail on herself to forego it, as her father would certainly have commanded her to do. Nothing is more common than for children to evade the sin of flat disobedience by deception and concealment. Jenny Deans, a stricter moralist than Rosalind, set out on her pious pilgrimage without consulting her father, because she could expect no blessing if she had incurred his expressed prohibition. This, to be sure, was a practical sophism; but no Jesuit's head is so full of sophistry as a woman's heart under the influence of strong affection. Yet Rosalind might at any rate have shown more interest in her father's fortunes. The two fair cousins are beautifully contrasted; even their respective sizes are characteristic and emblematic of their several natures, though perhaps it originated in the necessities of the stage. Allusions to the scanty dimensions of the female characters are common in old plays. It might not be easy to procure youths of a tall woman's height with

feminine looks and uncracked voices. Orlando, though an indifferent versifier, is a sweetly poetic lover, and a noble fellow; but Oliver is thoroughly odious in the first scenes, and his sudden change of nature baffles all credulity of imagination. Such a man could not change, unless it pleased Omnipotence to annihilate his soul and create another in the same body. Celia is even more imprudent than her cousin, to love and vow without longer trial. This I think the worst defect of the play. The usurping duke, though not much better than Oliver, has at least a more powerful motive for his villany. His reformation is unskilfully managed, and the last act is altogether hurried and unsatisfactory. Nothing can exceed the mastery with which Shakspeare, without any obtrusive or undramatic description, transports the imagination to the sunny glades and massy shadows of umbrageous Arden. The leaves rustle and glisten, the brooks murmur unseen in the copses, the flowers enamel the savannahs, the sheep wander on the distant hills, the deer glance by and hide themselves in the thickets, and the sheepcotes sprinkle the far landscape all spontaneously, without being shown off, or talked about. You hear the song of the birds, the belling of the stags, the bleating of the flocks, and a thousand sylvan, pastoral sounds beside, blent with the soft complaints and pleasant ambiguities of the lovers, the sententious satire of Jacques, and the courtly fooling of Touchstone, without being told to listen to them. Shakspeare does all that the most pictorial dramatist could do,

without ever sinking the dramatist in the landscape-painter. The exuberant descriptions of some recent authors are little more dramatic than the voluminous stage directions in translated German melodramas. I know not what share the absence of painted scenes might have in preserving our old dramatists from this excess, but I believe that the low state of estimation of landscape painting had a good deal to do with it. Luxurious description characterises the second childhood of poetry. In its last stage, it begins, like Falstaff, to babble of green fields.

ON THE USES OF ADVERSITY.

ACT II., SCENE I.

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in its head.”

There is a beautiful propriety in the word *uses* here, which I do not remember to have seen remarked. It is the use, not the mere effect of adversity, wherein resides the sweet. Whether adversity shall prove a stumbling-block, a discipline, or a blessing, depends altogether on the use made of it. There is no natural necessary operation of adversity, to strengthen, to purify, or to humanise. Men may be made better by affliction, but they cannot be made good. From an evil-heart, the harder it is wrung, the blacker the drops that issue. If perfumes are the sweeter for crushing, so are stench more pestiferous. Even the average quality of mankind are much oftener the worse than the better for

continued suffering. All, indeed, might be better for chastening; but that any individual will be the better, no one has a right to presume, for we know not what use he will make of the dispensation. There is, however, an important distinction, too often practically overlooked. Inflictions of Providence, such as sickness, loss of friends, unfavourable seasons, blows of fortune in which no human hand is seen, do act for the most part kindly on all but the worst natures. If for a while they wrestle with God, like Job, they submit in the end, and obtain a blessing. But when the penal agent is a fellow-creature, when sorrow comes of unkindness, ruin of fraud or violence, dejection of oppression, then indeed there needs a special grace to make sweet use of adversity. It is the very damnation of tyranny that it causes many to sin, yea, to sin against the Lord and their own souls. The wise Christian will acknowledge the decree of Providence in all things, whether they come by the hand of man, of nature, or of fate. To him, therefore, all things work together for good; and such should we all strive to be in ourselves: but in our dealings with others, we should ever presume that the happier men are, the better they are like to be: that God can send affliction when it is fit, and that, while He reserves this painful prerogative to Himself, He Who alone knows how and when to exert it, imparts to us the blessed privilege to be the ministers and stewards of His bounties. If God chasteneth whom He loveth, He hateth the instruments of chastisement.

POETRY INTRODUCED AS SUCH BY SHAKSPEARE.

ACT IV., SCENE II.

“ Art thou god to shepherd turn'd,” &c.

Phebe is no great poetess. It may be remarked in general that the poetry introduced as such by Shakspeare is seldom better than doggrel. A poem in a poem, a play in a play, a picture in a picture, the imitation of flageolet or trumpet in pianoforte music, are all departures from legitimate art; and yet how frequent in our old drama was the introduction of play within play? Sometimes, as in *Bartholomew Fair*, the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the *Taming of the Shrew*, and others, the main performance is as it were double-dramatised; an expedient which Moore, in his *Lalla Rookh*, has transferred to narrative. But more frequently the episodic drama is more or less subservient to the plot, as in *Hamlet*, the *Roman Actor*, &c.; or purely burlesque, as in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

CHARACTER OF OLIVER.

ACT V., SCENE II.

I confess I know nothing in Shakspeare so improbable, or, truth to say, so unnatural, as the sudden conversion of Oliver from a worse than Cain, a coward fratricide in will, to a generous brother and a romantic lover. Neither gratitude nor love work such wonders with the Olivers of real life. Of love they are indeed incapable, and desire does but exas-

perate their villainy. Obligation, even for life and honour, may check the course of their malice for a time, but, increasing the consciousness of their guilt, will only in the long run urge them on to renewed atrocities. Romance is all very well in the forest of Arden, but Oliver is made too bad in the first scenes ever to be worthy of Celia, or capable of inspiring a kindly interest in his reformation. Celia is rather imprudent in accepting so suddenly a man of so indifferent a reputation; she should at least have put his repentance on a twelvemonth's trial. But in the fifth act ladies have no time for discretion.

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

◆

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

This play approaches nearer to farce than any other of Shakspeare, except the Comedy of Errors. All that relates to Bianca and her lovers is dull and un-Shakspearian. Garrick was not much to blame in separating the scenes between Catharine and Petruchio, which I believe to be true Shakspeare. Shakspeare has done wisely in making Petruchio a fortune-hunter. None but a fool would marry a shrew for love in the expectation of taming her. It is now pretty well understood that the Taming of the Shrew is borrowed from an old play of nearly the same title, and that the underplot is little altered. The induction, which is an old story, the germ of which may be found in the Arabian Nights, is

re-written : the language certainly politer, but little added to the humour.

If there be any purpose in this comedy, beyond a hearty laugh, (which of itself is good for soul and body,) it is not to show how husbands should deal with unruly wives, but to admonish wives, and women in general, of the impotence of that which some women pride themselves in, and call a high spirit, which is only strong against the weak, cruel to the kind, and utterly unavailing when its use becomes justifiable. It is only in duty, affection, piety, that woman can, or ought to be strong. Her power is in her weakness. Tobin's Honeymoon is a fair imitation ; but, by making Duke Aranza a lover at the bottom, he has changed the farcical improbability of Shakspeare into unnatural impossibility.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Laf.—"A fistula, my lord."—ACT I., SCENE I.

What a malady for a king to languish of, and a maiden to cure ! Yet, if we may trust the commentators on Rabelais, the chivalrous François premier was afflicted with a like ailment. Nothing evinces the ἀπειροκαλία of our ancestors more than the frequency of their allusions to the most loathsome infirmities, not always satirical, or confined to punitive inflictions. Spenser, the sweet Spenser, is not absolutely free from this deformity. It was the vice

of the time, rather fostered than corrected by certain divines who thought to unsensualize mankind by making the body as disgusting as possible.

CHARACTER OF BERTRAM.

Is not Bertram made worse than even the plot requires? That he should desert a wife who was forced upon him, and pursue other dames, is natural and excusable enough; but what need of making him so abominable a liar? But it was the fashion of Shakspeare's day, and of the days before him, to represent men as villainous, to prove woman patient and forgiving. What a rascal, for instance, is Duke Walter; how unworthy of Griselda—how worthy of a halter!

TWELFTH NIGHT.

Strange alchemy of Shakspeare!—of such a tale to make so sweet a play. Never did lovely love show lovelier than in the sweet mystery of Viola's riddles; never was maiden pride more masterly rebuked than in Olivia's quick-conceiving passion! She, who disdained all love, to love at one sight, and to love so far awry. But poor Malvolio is my favourite. What though drunken Sir Toby and the minx Maria mock him, Shakspeare did not.

WINTER'S TALE.

—♦—
CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

In this wild drama the comedy is excellent, the pastoral is exquisite; but of the scenes which carry on the plot, some appear to me to be harsh in the thought, and infelicitous in diction:—Shakspeare throughout, but not always Shakspeare in a happy vein. The sudden jealousy of Leontes, though unaccountable, is not impossible. I am not sure that the ready soliciting of Hermione and the easy compliance of Polixenes might not produce, in a better mind, a momentary cloud, a wish that the request had not been made, an impatience for Polixenes' departure. How slight a spark may cause explosion in the foul atmosphere of a despot's heart it is hard to say. Irresponsible power is tyranny without, and moral anarchy within. We should little wonder at the conduct of Leontes in an Eastern tale. Many of the sultans in the Arabian Nights act as madly and wickedly, whom yet the inventors evidently meant for wise and gracious princes; nay, history records abundant instances of like abjuration of reason in men not incapable of generosity or incidental greatness, to say nothing of taste and sensibility for which some of the worst of kings have been conspicuous. But the exhibition of such madness of the heart, if fit for drama at all, should be confined to the sternest tragedy. The grossness of Leontes' imaginations, his

murderous suggestions, and inaccessibility to reason, remorse, or religion, is naturally consequent on the base passion, say rather the unclean dæmon, that possesses him. It is nature such as may still be found in St. Giles's. But is it possible that one who had once fallen thus could ever again be worthy of a restoration to happiness? In the constituted order of human progression—surely never. Remorse, the tyrant would feel; but it would urge him to vengeance on the instruments of his crimes—perhaps to some superstitious rite—some self-sought atonement; but never to a heart-cleansing repentance. For the improbability of the events I care as little as for the violation of the unities and the outrages on geography. Except Autolycus, none of the characters show much of Shakspeare's philosophic depth. On him I think I could lecture very psychologically. Hermione is frank and noble, rising in dignity as she falls in fortune—not unlike Marie Antoinette, whose unsuspecting levity, though it alienated not her husband, exposed her to the slander of foul minds that had not even the excuse of jealousy—in sunshine a butterfly, in misery a martyr. Paulina is an honest scold. Perdita a pretty piece of poetry. Polixenes not very amiable, nor, in truth, much of anything. The length of time he remains witness to his son's courtship, before he discovers himself, is a sacrifice to effect. Camillo is an old rogue whom I can hardly forgive for his double treachery. The Shepherd and his son are well enough in their way; but Mopsa and Dorcas might be countrified enough with better

tongues in their heads. Of the rest nothing need be said. The progressive interest of the play, *malgré* the vast hiatus for which Shakspeare himself thought it necessary to apologise, is well sustained; but the catastrophe is hurried, and the queen's reanimation, in the last scene, beyond all dramatic credibility. Yet it acts well, and the whole is pleasing and effective on the stage.

NARRATIVE PORTIONS.

ACT V., SCENE II.

What was Shakspeare's motive for conveying by narrative what he might have made so pathetic in representation? This is the more strange and provoking, inasmuch as narrative is by no means his forte, except when it is combined with action or passion; and those euphuistic gentlemen talk mere epigram and antithesis, very like, I dare say, the newsmongers of that day, when it was as essential to gentility to be quaint as at present to be commonplace. I suspect Shakspeare sometimes was hurried in his latter scenes, and could compose this sort of dialogue with the least aid from inspiration.

KING JOHN.

ON THE HISTORICAL PLAYS.

Shakspeare's historical plays certainly include a considerable space of time, but their duration should

not be computed by the chronicle dates. However distant the events might be in actual occurrence, if the drama makes them interdependently consecutive, they have all the connection which just criticism requires. If the ideal unity be preserved, if the continuity be uninterrupted, it is little matter whether the period be long or short in which the incidents are supposed to occur. It must be recollected that the Dramatic History is a distinct species of composition, inferior, perhaps, to the regular tragedy as a panorama is inferior to a true tragic or epic picture; but, at any rate, different, and not amenable to the same rules.

ELEANOR AND CONSTANCE.

ACT II., SCENE I.

I should be glad to find that this altercation was transferred from the old "troublesome reign," for it is very troublesome to think it Shakspeare. I do not exactly know how great ladies scold, and there are reasons for supposing that Queen Elizabeth herself was not always quite queenlike in her wrath; but there is so little of humour, propriety, or seemliness in the discourse of the two princesses, and Constance is at last so confused and unintelligible, if not corrupt, that the whole might well be spared. Massinger, in the Duke of Milan, has a yet grosser dialogue of vituperation between Mariana, Isabella, and Marcellia; but it is not so utterly out of place; and, besides, Massinger's ladies are seldom gentlewomen.

CHARACTER OF KING JOHN.

ACT III., SCENE III.

In the old play of King John, 1591, Faulconbridge's execution of this order is exhibited on the stage, and he finds a young smooth-skinned nun in a chest where the abbot's treasures were supposed to be deposited. It showed the good taste and boldness of Shakspeare that he did not retain this incident, so well calculated to make vulgar spectators laugh. He makes no reflection on the doctrine or discipline of Rome, far less does he calumniate the purity of her devoted virgins. He makes a king speak the sentiments of every king who did not need the Pope's countenance. John, when he found this need, crouched as vilely to the Pope as the most grovelling of Papists, and Shakspeare does not conceal the circumstance. How different from the absurdity of Bishop Bale, who makes the murderous, lustful, impious infidel John, a Protestant hero.

LATTER SCENES OF THE PLAY.

These latter scenes of King John are very *serious*. After the death of Arthur all interest is at an end, and Faulconbridge himself proves bad enough to be the legitimate son of a speech-making peer. Fine lines, fine sentences, fine orations may be quoted, but all lies dead; neither for John nor his opponents do we longer care. This protraction of the business, after the interest has ceased, is a crying sin, and, in

fact, the worst that Shakspeare is ever guilty of. Some other plays have it in a less degree, *e. g.* Henry VIII., where it is impossible to care about any body after Wolsey and Queen Catherine are gone. Of the dying scene, where King John begs for cold comfort, I could never make up my judgment. It is either admirable or execrable; but, at any rate, it does not result from the foregoing passages of the play. Of the historic dramas, King John is perhaps the worst constructed, and King Richard II., which wants little to be a regular tragedy, is certainly the best. The course of action, which commences in the first scene, proceeds with little interruption to the conclusion. In pathos few plays excel it, yet it is not a general favourite, perhaps for want of a striking female character. As to the Queen, though she makes some pretty womanly speeches, she might be left out altogether without making a hole in the ballad. Yet it appears to have been once highly popular; for it was three times printed before 1623, viz. in 1597, 1598—1608.

KING RICHARD II.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

Why is this play set down among Shakspeare's minors? In point of construction it approaches more nearly to a regular tragedy than any other of the historic dramas. The catastrophe is a plain conse-

quence of the series of actions opened in the first scene. There is little or nothing throughout the play that can be pronounced inconsequent. The deposition and death of Richard result, and are clearly shown to result, from his unjust interference in the quarrel of Norfolk and Bolingbroke; and every step in the drama advances towards the conclusion. Then the composition, if we except a little, a very little too much of rhyme and conceit in the first act, is in Shakspeare's best manner, just as poetical as it should be, and no more; in philosophy it is only second to Hamlet, in political wisdom second to none. In truth, it is almost a prophecy; for Shakspeare's Richard the Second was the real Charles the First. The defect of the play is that Richard stands alone: the other characters are nobodies, unless we except old York — that true, good, wrong-headed, ultra royalist.

FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV.

SHAKSPEARE'S PLOTS BORROWED.

Both Henry IV. and Henry V. were founded on an old play—The Famous Victories of Henry V. I have never seen it, but it appears to have been dull and worthless. The Prince a drunken rake, and Oldcastle a witless blackguard. It has sometimes been alleged, in disparagement of Shakspeare, that his plots are generally, perhaps it might be said, always borrowed, and that many of his plays were

refacciamenti of elder dramas; now, I believe nothing would more exalt our estimation of his genius than an acquaintance with the sources from which he derived his incidents; the “*lateritiam invenit marmoream reliquit*” would apply more truly to him than to Dryden.

SHAKSPEARE'S KNOWLEDGE OF NATURAL HISTORY.

The hill that rises over the battle-field near Shrewsbury is called Haughmond Hill. Mr. Blakeway says that Shakspeare has described the ground as accurately as if he had surveyed it. “It still merits the appellation of a bosky hill.”—*Pict. Shakspeare*. With Mr. Blakeway's leave, I must suppose him to have been bosky when he made the observation. Shakspeare does not describe the ground at all. It is no part of a dramatist's duty to describe a present object as if he had surveyed it. Neither do I think that Worcester's simile of “the cuckoo's bird” proves Shakspeare a better naturalist than Pliny or Linnæus, though it does avoid mistakes in which the Swede has followed the Roman, both of whom, I am informed, believed that the young cuckoo devours first the nestlings and then the parent bird. Shakspeare knew much of nature,—of birds, and beasts, and plants, and streams, and seasons. Even in London he was not necessarily in the condition of him who “saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.” London, in his day, was not indeed *Rus in Urbe* but *Urbs in Rure*. Meditator as he was, he was no abstract muser: he walked with his eyes

and ears open, too zealously awake not to see without prying and to hear without listening of malice pre-pense. His mind was no less receptive than assimilative and generative (creative no human mind can be), as sensitive to impressions as photogenized paper, an intimate, but not I should conjecture a student or scientific observer of nature, therefore not a naturalist in the very best sense of the word, but in the sense, the only sense in which a dramatic poet as such ought to be a naturalist. Besides, I believe, he was a keen sportsman, and in his boyhood better acquainted with bird's nests than the friends of humanity might wish. He was not likely to consult Pliny for the natural history of the cuckoo, and though I dare say he knew a fair portion of Latin, would hardly read him in the original. Philemon Holland's translation was not published till 1601. That must have been as great a favourite with Shakspeare as with the elder dramatists, but Henry IV. was printed 1598. Pliny says nothing of the cuckoo's partiality for the hedge-sparrow's nest, but says that it "lays in other birds' nests, and most of all in the stockdove's," which may be true in Italy. Dr. Jenner was the first to observe how the young cuckoo uses its fellow nestlings.

KING HENRY'S CLOSING SPEECH.

If we are to consider this "first part" as an entire play, King Harry's closing speech offends sadly against Aristotle, in a point wherein Aristotle's authority, if sound in itself, has a jurisdiction general,

and not limited by the usages of the Greek stage. It is a conclusion in which nothing is concluded. Now the Stagyrice expressly defines the conclusion thus—Τελευτή δὲ, ὁ αὐτο μετ' ἄλλο πέφυκεν εἶναι, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἄλλο οὐδέν. Had the last speech been omitted, the fault would not have been palpable; for the tragic interest of the play rests solely upon Hotspur, and closes with his death.

SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV.

HOW TO BREAK THE NARRATIVE.

ACT I., SCENE I.

This is a scene in which Shakspeare bears comparison with the Greek tragedians. A large part of almost every Greek play is taken up in conjectures and relations of news. Now there is nothing, either in epic or dramatic poetry, so unmanageable as plain statement. The fine art is to break the narrative by passionate questions, to draw it from interested and interesting personages. To avoid a set story or gazette, if possible. Shakspeare, like Æschylus, assumes the utmost pomp of diction on these occasions, complying, unweeingly, with Aristotle's precepts respecting the ἀργὰ μέρη.

FALSTAFF.

ACT I., SCENE II.

It is probable that some notorious beggar or exhibiting man-mountain of Shakspeare's own time was present to the author's eye. Be it always remembered that Falstaff did not live under Henry IV. His better moiety lived never and lives ever, but his husky circumstance was bred under Elizabeth. Shakspeare's genius did not lead him to deal much in matters of the day, but when an allusion occurred he thought nothing about posterity.

INTEREST FELT BY SHAKSPEARE'S CONTEMPORARIES
IN THE HISTORICAL DRAMA.

ACT II., SCENE III.

Excellent as this scene is in its kind, replete with politic prudence and apt illustrations, embodied in language apposite and dignified, yet sufficiently conversational, and in metre truly dramatic and eloquent, yet we may well wonder by what power of patience in the auditory, what grace and charm of elocution in the actors, it ever could be performed without making the house either drowsy or fidgetty. Modern dramatists have been justly censured for indulging too much in still-life lullaby poetry, yet of poetry a sweet voice and graceful carriage may always make something; while here we have neither action nor passion, nor luxury of music and fancy, but quiet deliberation,—an orderly cabinet council. The explanation can only be found

in the deep historic interest which our ancestors felt in the acted histories.

FALSTAFF.

ACT V., SCENE V.

Ch. Just.—"Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet."

Poor Falstaff! Such is the just reward of a mighty intellect misused! This is the true moral of the play—not to exalt Henry's reformation, a low contrived trick, but to rebuke the prostitution of powers, essentially philosophic, to vanity, buffoonery, and sensuality. Poin was not far wrong in judging Hal a most princely hypocrite.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

Notwithstanding the masterly writing of this play, it is in its serious parts the least interesting of all the historical dramas. Neither for the royalists nor the insurgents do we care anything—both talk well and wisely, but both are alike hollow and selfish. The death-bed of the King has been as much selected and bepraised as anything in Shakspeare; but it is no surpassing favourite of mine. I know not another passage so encumbered with conceits, crabbed, and hidebound in themselves, and not justified, as Shakspeare's conceits generally are by character and passion. There is an intense kinginess about the elder Harry which takes from our sympathies with

his sufferings as a father and a dying man, and though he confesses his guilty acquisition of the crown he testifies no repentance

KING HENRY V.

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CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

Of all Shakspeare's dramas, Henry V. is, in its serious parts, the least truly dramatic. It abounds, above all his works, in description—description, perhaps, more poetical than picturesque, since almost every image is instinct with passion, or significant of thought. In truth, Shakspeare could hardly have described a picture—a still scene, either of nature or life, had he tried. In the Tarquin and Lucrece he has tried, and failed, as utterly, though far more gloriously, as any of the rhyming gentry who have employed their pens in giving advice to painters; all of whom, from Anacreon down to Blackmore, seem to have forgotten that a painter can represent but one single moment of time, though, indeed, a poetical painter will make that moment representative of a whole action—an adequate symbol of a total life. Shakspeare's mistake is not so much the neglect of simultaneity in the objects presented to the imagination as the describing of things as painted which are not objects either of the outer or inward eye, but pure operations of mind, passion, recollection, anticipation.

This play bears a comparison in some respects with the *Persæ* of Æschylus. Both, probably, were peace-offerings to national vanity, in which the judgment of the authors had little share. Both contain much narration, a good deal of stage-bustle, but little real dramatic action, and not much effective pathos. The same mixture of gorgeous diction with familiar, pithy, idiomatic phrases, would, I doubt not, be manifest in both were Greek capable of sounding familiarly to English ears. The ragged coat and miserable plight of Xerxes, and the howling concert in which he leads the senatorial band of Persia, are as alien to tragic dignity as King Henry's courtship or Princess Catherine's broken English. But Æschylus, himself a warrior, assumes the port of Mars more gracefully than Shakspeare, who is seldom less himself than on the field of battle; not that he wants martial fire, but "he thinks too much," and is very impatient of narration. The chorus of this play is, it must be confessed, a very inartificial expedient, though the lines themselves are beautiful. But Shakspeare was aware that the reign of the fifth Harry was a theme for the epic rather than the scenic poet, and finding much description and much narrative indispensable, took the shortest mode to acquit himself of the task, without loading and retarding the action of the drama. Besides, the proud veneration with which the public looked back to the days of Harry and of Agincourt required and justified a more ceremonious induction than might suit a less redoubtable tale.

The comic scenes are far more hearty, vital, and Shakspearean than those which strictly speaking are historical. I cannot say much, indeed, for the Princess's English lesson, nor any of the parts where the French are principals, but the death of Falstaff, the disguised King's encounter with Williams, and the whole character of Fluellen are worthy of their author.

I am glad to find that in my apology for the chorus, I am anticipated by Schlegel, whose lectures I had never read when the above was written.

FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.

SHAKSPEARE AND HIS COMMENTATORS.—POPULARITY.

To what shall I liken Shakspeare and his annotators? To the sun kissing carrion and breeding maggots? To a fine statue, dressed up in all the absurdities of an old clothes shop? To justice and reason, expounded in the statutes at large? To a god, half-choked with unsavoury incense? To a giant, surprised in his sleep, and tied to the earth by his own hair and beard? A philosophical editor of Shakspeare has not yet appeared on earth.* Even his text, for which Tibbald, good, honest, dull Tib-

* When I wrote this, I had not seen—indeed, I have not yet seen—either Knight's or Collier's Shakspeare. I doubt not they are rich mines of antiquarian knowledge. But Knight—to judge from his *Life of Shakspeare*—is a great deal too hypothetical.

bald, has done the most, is far from perfectly restored. A competent knowledge of provincial dialect, and an enlarged view of the logic of universal grammar, would elucidate and correct passages which now remain in misapprehended conceit and idolised nonsense. What antiquarian research can do for him, it is probable that Malone and Steevens have performed. Their notes are, however, much more valuable for the quantity of curious information and odd quotation they contain, than for the light they throw on Shakspeare, whose allusions to obsolete customs are by no means the most pregnant source of his difficulties. It is always delightful to trace the reading of a great author, and yet more to observe the effect of his works on his great contemporaries. The dramatists, particularly Fletcher, doubtless owe something to Shakspeare, but we do not find him in the graver treatises, nor in the fashionable undramatic poetry. Drayton, however, had studied him, as his *Nymphidia** proves; but perhaps even he owed his acquaintance with him more to the stage than the closet. I know not any work so Shakspearean in its diction and tone of sentiment as England's *Heroical Epistles*. Shakspeare in his own day was doubtless popular; but the popularity of a dramatist, who claimed no rank in the learned literature of his age, and did not even publish his plays, must have been confined to the suspected race of play-goers. His *Venus and Adonis* obtained a dubious notoriety, not

* I am not certain of the dates of Drayton's *Nymphidia* and *Heroical Epistles*. Shakspeare might be borrower.

likely to recommend him to the austere and solid scholars who composed folios and quartos. No wonder that Bacon quotes him not. The Chancellor was, perhaps, seldom at a play, and could not safely quote from the mouth of an actor. No collection of Shakspeare's plays was published till long after the principal works of Bacon were completed, nor, if we except the Essays, do they furnish many occasions for poetical quotation at all. Burton once mentions Shakspeare. Hakewell, a solemn reasoner on the course of Providence, could not decorously allude to the wood-notes of an illiterate stage-player. Shakspeare was popular, and his fame was securely planted, but he was not a writer of reputation—for reputation is somewhat different both from popularity and fame. Popularity is the gift of the people. Fame is conferred by the permanent universal reason. Reputation is the opinion of the judging, not always the judicious few. Virgil, of all writers, has had the greatest reputation. Ovid and Horace are more popular. Homer and Shakspeare are his rivals in fame. Addison and Pope, Locke and Paley, of English authors, have enjoyed the strongest reputation, but they are neither so popular, nor in the truest sense so famous, as John Bunyan. Of living writers, I should say Scott was the most popular, Southey the best reputed, Wordsworth the most famous. Popularity is, however, a much better earnest of fame than reputation—for popularity and fame alike are effects of a work—reputation is merely imputed—it is a decision by statute, not in equity.

A popular book may be mischievous, but it cannot be inert. There is little chance of a work obtaining posthumous popularity which misses at its first appearance. Collins might be cited as an exception, but his poems were scarce published in his lifetime.

SHAKSPEARE.—SPURIOUS DRAMAS.

Wordsworth expresses a doubt, whether Shakspeare was, in his lifetime, more famous or popular than his dramatic contemporaries; but surely the number of worthless plays falsely imputed to him sufficiently evince his pre-eminence in public favour, even were it not confirmed by the unwilling testimony and invidious carpings of play-wrights and pamphleteers, whose reputation was afflicted by his predominance. Of the first part of Henry VI., I do not believe he wrote many lines. It is unpoetical, flatly versified, and, if we except the death scene of the two Talbots, does not contain a single passage of eminent merit. Who will believe that the noble-minded Shakspeare would have so foully libelled the heroine of Arc? It is remarkable that pseudo-Shakspearean plays are among the worst in the language. The Yorkshire Tragedy is, however, powerfully written. Pericles is much if not all Shakspeare. Some commentators, and Johnson among them, suggest that these plays might be Shakspeare's early efforts, but they are no more *adolescensia Shaksperii* than the *Odyssey* is *senium Homeri*. What is his—and in the second

and third parts there is a good deal of his—is rather in his riper than his earlier manner. The character of Gloster emanates from the same mind that produced Richard III. In these parts Shakspeare resembles a great master who has partially retouched and coloured a picture of which the dead ground had been worked in by a common sign-painter. Much of the colouring, and many fine traits of expression are his; but the design, the grouping, the composition betokens an inferior hand. Indeed the subject itself is utterly unmanageable. It is too long, diffused and sprawling even for a poem. Daniel has given it neither unity, continuity, or legitimate beginning, middle, or end. A score of tragedies or legends might be made out of the same space of history; but they would all labour under the disadvantage that the conclusions would not be conclusive. Compare the versification of this scene, and indeed of the dead ground of all the three parts, with that of the rudest plays of Shakspeare (as the Comedy of Errors)—compare the whole texture of thought and language with the worst of his genuine works, and you will be convinced (if you have sense enough to be worth convincing) that these are none of Shakspeare's *juvenilia*. He may have sometimes written in worse taste, more quaintly, obscurely, or extravagantly, but when did he write at all like these scenes? When does he not display a fluency, an interfluence of thought and music, which is here utterly wanting? There is no inosculation. Line is piled upon line—sentence upon sentence—neatly and orderly enough, like planks in

a timber-yard ; whereas the genuine Shakspeare, in his wilder works, is an Indian forest, where the trees not only knit their imperious branches on high, but are so netted and manacled together by creepers and filaments, and so beset with suckers, that it is hard to establish the individuality of a single trunk, and the very Hamadryads are at a loss to know their own. Yet, though the play contains little of poetry, little that takes root and germinates in the mind, there is so much action, such a vernacular strength of diction, such downright business-like vigour about it, especially in the quarrelling and fighting parts, that it cannot be deemed uninteresting notwithstanding the want, the fatal want, of any one leading character. Had Talbot been brought more into relief, and had his death formed the catastrophe, it would have been a most spirited, stirring drama. But it has no unity of purpose, and that is a unity that cannot be dispensed with. Whoever was the author, he could have written plays much better adapted to keep an audience or a reader alive, than the dreamy Amœbæan poetry of some moderns ! composed to the tune that Hermes played to Argus, when one by one the hundred eyes were drowsed.

“The Duke of Bedford had a prisoner,” &c.

How strong a trait of the aristocratic spirit of chivalry : a true knight would rather be in Tartarus, with noble blood, than sit before the mercy-seat of heaven with base mechanicals and fishermen. These

things are true history : the old chronicles are full of them, but the so-called histories, which alone are accessible to the many, seldom deign to mention any of them. Thus, *malgré* the confusion and manifold blunders of this drama, I count it better history than Hume's or Macintosh's Essay on the same period.

CONCLUDING NOTICE.—ORIGIN OF THE HISTORIC
DRAMA.

Who was the author of this play ? It scarce carries one mark of Shakspeare. It is too sober for Marlowe or Kidd, and yet no man could have written it but one who was capable of better things. Ancient poetry shot forth like a star from a pitchy cloud. Homer collected into his orb all the vagrant meteors of heroic fiction, and all that was before him was like the light of the first day, ere the sun was created or the moon and stars began their everlasting journey. Modern poetry was like a spark blown into fulgence by the dying breath of the ancients ;—one single faggot among a heap of dry branches, and when it blazed the highest there was a smoke and a crackling that betrayed the ligneous and carbonaceous quality of the fuel. The rhyming chronicles led the way to the Mirror for Magistrates, and that gave the hint for the dramatic histories. Drayton and Sackville wrote legends—Shakspeare may be excused for writing historic plays.

SECOND PART OF KING HENRY VI.

Cade. Contrary to the king, his crown, and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill.—ACT. IV., SCENE VII.

ACCORDING to my book, which is not indeed over trustworthy, the first paper-mill in England was erected at Dartford, Kent, 1588. Possibly, though it is not easy to see why, this was a topic of popular outcry. Perhaps foreigners were employed—perhaps the projector was unpopular. There have always been a race of politicians averse to all improvements and innovations, and, whether Whigs or Tories, they have seldom scrupled to solicit the multitude to fly in the tail of their prejudices.

CHARACTER OF MOBS.

In one thing, mobs must have altered greatly, if Shakspeare's representations were ever true. A speech might stir them, but could never put them down; and they are now anything but *mobile*. They move indeed, but it is as a stone trundling down a mountain side, by the mere *vis inertię*. I doubt, indeed, whether Cade was deserted in consequence of any arguments like those put into Clifford's mouth. The ambitious wars of Henry V. had laden the Commons with burdens, and proved a source of universal distress and beggary. They had ended, too, in worse than nothing. I do not believe the English mob were ever very partial to heroes, unless they be of their own side, and popular characters to boot. Nelson was a mob-idol

indeed, so was Vernon in his day; but they were sailors, and Jack Tar is a jolly fellow, and a general favourite—he treats all round. But Marlborough and Wellington, our greatest generals, have been anything but popular, though of opposite politics, and not very similar characters. Wars are sometimes popular while they last, but they seldom leave agreeable recollections, even when brought to a glorious conclusion.

I well recollect my dear father remarking that it was a great shame of Mister Alexander Iden not to give Cade a meal of meat before he fought him. His exultation over the carcase was perhaps in the spirit of the devout age of Queen Elizabeth, when England was in the hey-day of her zeal; but it is very shocking.

THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.

METAPHORS.—SHAKSPEARE, MASSINGER, CAREW.

ACT V., SCENE IV.

A CURIOUS instance of a metaphor spun out to an allegory. There is something like it in Quarles, but much more quaint and ingenious. Shakspeare's broken metaphors have been censured, but they are far more true, vital, imaginative, and dramatic than this painful fancy-work. In truth, the speech would be quite as much in character if uttered by Commodore Trunnion, or any of Dibdin's Jack Tars. There is a rather shorter string of naval similitudes in the

death scene of King John, which, though shorter, is perhaps still more *ἀτοπὸν*. Another like string of sea-similes is in Massinger's *Guardian*, Act iv., Scene 9, where an imprudent lady complains that her understanding is stowed under hatches. Massinger was like Dryden, much addicted to technicals. Carew has something of the same kind about a bark, a tide of pride, gulfs of disdain, despair at the helm, &c. ;* but this being neither drama nor divinity, but the privileged nonsense of a fancy, not heart-sick lover in a miff, may pass for as much as it is worth.

Capel, whom S. T. C. designated the worst of commentators, (and if so, he must be bad indeed,) remarks on the lines—"What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster," &c., that he who cannot discern the pen who wrote them ought never to pretend to discernment hereafter. Now it happens that this speech is taken almost verbatim from the true tragedy of Richard Duke of Yorke, with the death of good King Henry VI., and the whole contention between the two houses of York and Lancaster, as it was sundry times enacted by the R. II. the Earl of Pembroke's servants—1595. This play, ascribed to Marlowe with much probability, but without direct evidence, was sold by Evans, Oct. 12, 1841, for fifteen pounds. That it was not published till two years after Marlowe's death, does not go to disprove his authorship. It was certainly the original, which Shakspeare partially retouched without much improving the rudeness of the outline.

* "Oh, gentle love, do not forsake the guide
Of my frail bark," &c.

CONCLUDING NOTICE.

All these three parts bespeak a most unlicked state of dramatic composition, if composition it can be called, wherein the several portions have no other cohesion than what they derive from a history which they do not half disclose. Events are constantly alluded to which are neither presented nor related. Shakspeare doubtless wrote many lines and speeches, but gave up the arrangement of the scenes as a bad job.

 RICHARD III.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

IN quantity and proportion, Richard the Second is a more regular tragedy than Richard the Third; in quality, there never was a profounder tragedy than that which commences on this page—an absolute destiny involved in a human will—an instrument of fate self-chosen, self-condemned, excommunicated by nature, yet with an intellect concentrated by frost, works in the mishaped shape of Richard—a thing far more to be pitied than abhorred. It is not tragic, it is tragedy.

 ACT. I., SCENE II.

‘Ο Μακαρίτης, whose dealings with Shakspeare sometimes remind me of Bentley’s Milton, and of the

Socinian version of the New Testament, disliked this scene so much that he would not admit it to be of Shakspeare's original conception, though he could not deny that the words, as they stand at present, were of his composition. Of that, indeed, there can be no doubt. Any one of the old writers in such a scene would have been far more gross and offensive. Still it is possible that he borrowed the situation from an older play; and, as it is admirably adapted for acting, to have omitted it would have offended both the audience and the actors. There was a play of Samuel Rowley, called "R. 3, or the English Profit" (Prophet), a revival of which is noticed in the office-book of Sir H. Herbert, as licensed 27th July, 1623, for the Palgrave's Players, though it is not absolutely clear whether the play itself, or the reformation, as alterations were then called, were the work of Rowley, who was certainly alive in 1623. But there is no proof that this play was older than Shakspeare, to whom Rowley appears to have been junior. The second title (a good sample of Sir Henry's spelling), whatever it may refer to, shows plainly that a different plot was pursued. Probably the prophet whose ominous G. occasioned the death of Clarence, was a conspicuous personage.* The play, I believe, is not extant. We may, however, be sure that so tragical a portion of English history, and one so nearly connected with the glory of the Tudors, had

* *Clarence.* A wizard told him that by G
His issue disinherited should be.
And, for my name of George begins with G,
It follows in his thought that I am he.

been dramatised before Shakspeare was connected with the theatre. But that any part of the present play, as it now stands, was composed by any other than Shakspeare, appears to me very improbable. It smacks of the master in every line. It appears to have been highly popular, being three times printed by 1600—in 1597, 1598, 1600. It must, therefore, have been one of Shakspeare's earlier pieces. I think, however, that the period of Shakspeare's debut as an independent dramatist is fixed too late by modern editors. He was not likely in 1593 to present his *Venus and Adonis* to a distinguished nobleman in terms that imply something like favoured intimacy, if he had had heretofore no other name or mark than that of a vamped of old plays. Strong probabilities fix the date of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1591. The absence of any comic character from *Richard the Third*, as well as from *Richard the Second*, is a remarkable circumstance, and goes far to prove that they are not partial improvements or reformations of elder dramas, but entire works of their great author. The quantity of rhyme in *Richard the Second* inclines me to suppose it to be older than *Richard the Third*, the fame of which did not prevent other writers from attempting the same subject. Henslowe, in 1602, advanced 10*l.* to Ben Jonson, in earnest of a book called "*Richard Crookback.*" Whether Ben ever finished the play is not obvious,—no such is now to be found with his name. The sum was very large for an earnest in those days, when, a little before, the price of an entire play did not exceed 6*l.* 10*s.* But Ben's

reputation was high, and, besides, he had also made additions to Jeronimo. What they were is not known.

RICHARD'S DREAM.

ACT V., SCENE III.

There is an apparent absurdity in either painting or acting a dream, which no beauty of execution can conceal. Jacob's dream has been painted by Rembrandt and by Alston—beautifully, I dare say, by both; but both make the mistake, as it appears to me, of introducing the sleeping Jacob in a corner. Who has not seen Joseph's dream and his sheaves? I am not forgetful that, according to the speculations of Shakspeare's day, separate spirits did converse with souls in sleep,—indeed, the opinion is older than Homer—must have been as old as the belief in prophetic dreams; but then the spirits were not supposed to be visible or audible to men awake. The best defence that can be made for Shakspeare in this case is, that the audience are to be identified with the personages of the drama; to know, and feel, and see, whatever is known, or felt, or seen by any one whom the poet introduces, and should always sink their own presence and existence. Thus does Campbell, in his *Life of Mrs. Siddons*, justify the actual appearance of Banquo's ghost on the stage when none but Macbeth is supposed to behold it. But the cases are not exactly similar. Ghosts were, in popular faith, objective existences whose visibility depended on their own volition. Not so dreams.

KING HENRY VIII.

REMARKS ON THE PROLOGUE.

THE prologue to King Henry the Eighth, gives us three pieces of information:—First, that certain auditors attended the historical plays with a purpose of seeing authentic history acted; secondly, that the price—we may suppose for the better places, corresponding to the modern pit and boxes—was one shilling; thirdly, that the stage-fools wore a long motley coat, guarded or trimmed with yellow. Perhaps we may add—fourthly, that the attraction of stage-processions, trumpets, &c., is not of modern date; nor the processions themselves an original sin of modern managers. If theatrical pageantry was less dazzling in former times than now, it was because theatres were poorer, not because taste was better. I agree with Dr. Johnson in doubting whether the prologue and epilogue to King Henry the Eighth were Shakspeare's own,—not because they speak contemptuously of fool and fight, but because they have not the *sévé* and *verdeur* of his vintage. Some commentator remarks that the coronation in this play is as objectionable as a battle. If the objection be to spectacle *in genere*, it may be so; but if the impossibility of adequate representation be alleged, Elliston has completely refuted it. It was a question whether the show went off better at the Abbey or at Drury Lane. In fact, it was very

splendid, expensive, and absurd at both. Old Drury could not have come so near the original Waterloo.

Unfit, as modern critics, aping the nicety of Athens, which forbade the tragedising of recent history, may think the events of a reign so fully and freshly in remembrance, as those of Henry VIII. must have been in Shakspeare's day, and bold as certainly was the introduction by name of persons whose immediate descendants were living, Shakspeare's is not the only drama on the subject. Rowley's "When you see me, you know me," according to Collier, dramatised some part of Henry's history. It is not easy to guess how the name applied; but the dramatists of that age, like the article writers and paragraphists of this, sought for taking titles without caring whether they fitted very close or not. The conflagration of the Globe theatre, 29th of June, took place during the performance of a play called "All is true," which Collier thinks might be Shakspeare's Henry VIII. The name would certainly characterise the historical fidelity. Shakspeare, with great prudence, has made no allusion to the religious disputes of the time. Indeed, both as a writer and as a man, he displayed more of that unromantic quality than some people suppose compatible with lofty genius. We never hear of his coming in collision with the Master of the Revels, or bringing the wrath of court or city upon his profession. The naughtiness of his "Venus and Adonis" exposed him to the censure of the graver sort; but even their rebukes are so gently worded, as to show that he was

a general favourite, while too many of his contemporaries were not only quarrelling with each other, but risking the very existence of the stage by their audacious discussions of religious and political topics on the boards,—a license probably derived from the old miracle plays and moralities—very tempting at a time when the playhouses and conventicles supplied the want of newspapers, and therefore not easily checked by the menacing orders of the privy council and the pruning hand of the licenser. This play comprises a space of nearly thirteen years, commencing soon after the meeting of Henry and Francis in the summer of 1520, and ending with the birth of Elizabeth, September 1533.

THE VISION.

ACT IV., SCENE I.

These stage directions are manifestly by Shakspeare himself; and curious, as almost the only real prose that remains of his composition. They show, too, that he was a consummate master of effect, and did not disdain to arrange the *ὄψις*.

CONCLUDING NOTE.

The necessity of complimenting, or, at least, applying to the present, has induced Shakspeare to protract this play beyond its natural conclusion. It should certainly have ended with the departure of Queen Catherine and of Wolsey. Shakspeare is highly to be commended for his close adherence to

the chronicles, and the masterly manner in which he has dramatised their contents,—still more for the exact justice done to Wolsey, and the noble vindication of Queen Catherine.

“ Indent with beauty how far to extend,
Set down desire a limit where to end,
Then charm thine eyes that they no more may wound,
And limit love to keep within a bound.”

Drayton's Heroical Epistles.

CORIOLANUS.



CHARACTER OF PLAY.

FIRST and best in the series of Roman plays appears Coriolanus. As far as incident is concerned, it is Plutarch's Life of Coriolanus described in scenes. The character, too, is exactly Plutarch's Coriolanus talking English blank verse. In fact, Plutarch was the Shakspeare of biography. What a volume of politics—what a searching examen of humanity might be made in form of a commentary on this play! In “Coriolanus,” the Roman and the man are so finely blended, that not a thread avows whether it be woof or warp.

1st Servant.—“Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.”—ACT IV., SCENE V.

“Plague of this dead peace,—this bastard-breeding, lousy, idleness.”—*Fletcher's Mad Lover, Act I.*

By these, and many other scattered allusions in

the plays of the period, we may conjecture that the long shutting of the Temple of Janus by the *Rex Pacificus* was far from popular. Yet there can be no doubt that in preserving peace, and neglecting the military, he acted most beneficially for the people, though ruinously for his family and for the regal power. War is the interest of kings, but it is quite as much the passion of nations. If man were not by nature a fighting, invading, plundering beast of prey, there would never have been kings at all. The patriarchal state would have been perpetuated. Yet neither kings nor ministers are answerable for all the mischief. Was not Walpole forced into a needless and impolitic war by mere popular clamour? As for the anti-Malthusian tendencies of peace, perhaps the observation arises from the fact, that bastardy is accounted a deadlier sin when the lawfully begotten are three in a bed.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

ACT I., SCENE III.

Casca.—"And yesterday the bird of night did sit."

Obscœnique canes, importunæque volucres
 Signa dabant.—*Virg. Geor.* i. 470.

To the most affecting prognostic of Cæsar's death Shakspeare has not alluded. The horses which had crossed the Rubicon, and which, ever since, had been allowed to range at liberty, refused to graze, and Suetonius says wept abundantly, *ubertim pleverunt*.

Brutus.—"Be patient till the last."—ACT III., SCENE II.

This is a speech of consummate skill. Brutus, unused and reluctant to speak before a vulgar audience, at first recurs to his common-places, as if he were striving to recollect the lessons he had been taught in the schools of rhetoric. Having mistaken the conclusions of a deluded understanding for the mandate of reason, he defends himself according to the tutored forms of the understanding in formal prose; but as he grows warm, and half convinced by his own argument, his heart gets up, and he becomes sincerely eloquent. The latter part of the speech, from "Who's here so base," &c., is verse, and should be so printed. Many instances might be produced where Shakspeare begins in prose and slides into metre. It may, indeed, be assumed that he never wrote prose, from laziness or the passion of convenience. His prose is harder than his verse. I have no doubt that he wrote blank verse quicker than prose, and, perhaps, rhyme quicker than either, as any man may do that has an ordinary command of language and knows all the *feasible* rhymes. Then, how admirably does the speech of Brutus contrast with Antony's, and yet both begin with an artful calmness,—both are inflamed by their own fluency; but the one only rises to a patriotic glow,—the other blazes into a passion.

ACT IV., SCENE III.

Brutus.—"Say'st thou thy leaden mace," &c.

"A *mace* is the ancient term for a sceptre."—*New Edition*.

The spirit of blundering has laid his leaden mace on the note-writer. A mace was a most formidable weapon, calculated for stunning. Had the allusion meant to royalise slumber, the epithet "murderous" would not have appeared. Besides, drowsiness is much better represented by a lord mayor or a vice-chancellor, or, best of all, a university preacher,—all of whom are attended by mace-bearers,—than by a king, who is proverbially wakeful.

 END OF PLAY.

Shakspeare seldom introduces many long or poetical speeches in his last acts—knowing that, in the crisis of action, men talk little. His conclusions are well adapted for representation. He was by no means so regardless, as certain both of his encomiasts and his detractors assert, of stage effect. Instead of the jingling morality appended to modern tragedies, which the walking gentleman, stumbling over the dead bodies to before the lamps, recites for the edification of the pit, and then bows to the gallery,—Shakspeare ends with a march, a dance, with some solemn or cheerful music, appropriate to the occasion.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.



CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

THE general neglect of "Antony and Cleopatra" by all but students of Shakspeare, and the preference long given to Dryden's play on the same subject, prove the danger of protracting the interest of a plot, in order to introduce a greater variety of incidents. The scenes, for example, wherein Pompey figures, though well-written, are wholly inconclusive; they form a part of the biography of Antony, not of his tragedy. Nor is it easy to conjecture Shakspeare's reason for introducing so many short scenes, which serve no purpose but to let the auditor know the news. They form a sort of back-ground to the picture, but they detain the action. For poetry and character, there are few dramas superior; nor is there any want of deep and grand pathos; but perhaps both Antony and Cleopatra are too heroic to be pitied for weakness, and too viciously foolish to be admired for their heroism. Seldom has unlawful love been rendered so interesting; but the interest, though not dangerous, is not perfectly agreeable.

"I'll set a bourne how far to be beloved."

If Antony owed to Cleopatra the loss of empire, he is indebted to her for less hateful renown than would else have clung to him. Shakspeare and

Dryden make the Philippics forgotten, and the murderer of Cicero is lost in the lover of Cleopatra.

Eno.—"The barge she sat in," &c.—ACT II., SCENE II.

Beautiful as this description is, one might almost desire that it had been uttered by a more interesting personage. Dryden has transferred it to Antony,—copied it pretty closely,—or perhaps kept closer to Plutarch's prose. The poetry he almost suppresses; but he certainly introduces the story more artfully. Narration for its own sake is not, however, a frequent fault of Shakspeare.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

CAMPBELL considers "Timon" as the worst of all Shakspeare's genuine plays. It is certainly one of the least pleasing and poetical. The plot is defective; after the *περιπετεῖα*, which takes place too soon—there is no further progress. The two last acts contain nothing but repeated instances of Timon's misanthropy. In fact, the story is too bare to furnish out a five-act drama. Lucian's dialogue is quite long enough. The episode of Alcibiades is not very skilfully interwoven, and grossly violates a well-known history. Yet, considered as a philosophic satire, the play has high merit; and some passages are almost

equal to "King Lear" in terrific grandeur. The curses of Timon are of the very soul of Jacobinism, and his address to the courtezans is as a voice from a charnel house,—so like the wind whistling through hollow bones. Who but Shakspeare could thus have elicited tragic terror from what, in itself, is merely loathsome? Timon, be it observed, is as indiscriminate in his philanthropy as in his misanthropy. Neither his benevolence nor his hate have any specific object. How different from the sentimental man-haters of modern plays!

TITUS ANDRONICUS.



INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

WHO was the author of Titus Andronicus? Shakspeare it certainly was not; yet it was no ordinary man. Marlowe has been suggested; but it is unlikely that a work of Marlowe's would have been unclaimed. I think Thomas Kidd the most probable person. It is shallow argument to conclude that because a few passages of a play are strikingly superior to the rest, they must necessarily have had a different author. The same man might produce a few lines of volcanic splendour, and a long series of dull declamations. True genius is like the healthful day that is shed over all the prospect, and shows its presence as much by the shades as the lights. Madness seems to burn and glow intensely, but never

casts a ray on the circumambient darkness. Genius is all things, and madness among the rest ; but madness is only madness, and its utmost cunning can only represent sanity by solemn stupidity. The least candle throws its light far and near, but the sulphurous exhalation is rounded and defined by utter gloom. The first scene in *Titus Andronicus* is that where Aaron rescues his child from the nurse ; it is also the only scene in which the moral feelings are pleurably interested. We have the evidence of Ben that this strange play was once popular. No wonder. I remember when I thought murder the essence of tragedy, and could as easily conceive a king without a crown, as a tragedy without homicide. The same story has been dramatised in Dutch. Schlegel maintains the authenticity, but he also stands up for the *London Prodigal*, the *Widow of Watling-Street*, *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, and *Sir John Oldcastle*, in which last Shakspeare is himself abused. The evidence of Meres, and of Hemming, and Conder prove nothing but that the play was ascribed to Shakspeare in his life-time, perhaps with his own connivance. They were probably part of the property of which he disposed on retiring from the theatre.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PLAY.—MR. THEOBALD'S OPINION.

“ Mr. Theobald says, ‘ This is one of the plays which he always thought, with the better judges, ought not to be acknowledged in the list of Shakspeare's genuine pieces.’ ”

I differ from Theobald here ; the versification is indeed far less dramatic than Shakspeare, but it is

sometimes very sonorous and harmonious. It cannot be denied that the external evidences for the authenticity of Titus are very strong. It is, perhaps, most likely that Shakspeare had some hand in it, after all. In atrocity and bloodshed it is nothing to some of the old plays. It is common to ascribe the low comedy of our dramatists to the necessity of propitiating the groundlings. I believe that the penny part of the audience were better pleased with rant, termagant, and slaughter, than even with fun and grimace; nothing draws a country audience like a tale of murder, especially if founded on fact.

Tam.—"My lovely Aaron," &c.—ACT II., SCENE III.

This is a beautiful speech; but Shakspeare would not have put such sweet poetry into the mouth of a libidinous fury. Yet "curtain'd with a counsel-keeping cave," is much in Shakspeare's manner.

CHARACTER OF THE PLAY.

The horrors of this lamentable tragedy remind one of Hesiod's Paradox, that half is more than all. They are so very thick sown, and so very horrible, that they do not excite any horror at all. It is difficult to conceive how our ancestors, who, we are told, greatly admired this play, if they could bear to see it at all, could have seen it without laughter. Yet it has much of that vigour of language in which the old dramatists never failed. There is nothing of the

involution, the conceit, the antithesis of Shakspeare's first manner. The writer seems to have been tolerably familiar with Latin school-books, notwithstanding some strange anachronisms of pedantry; as, for instance, tribunes under the empire, and the white electioneering apparel of the candidates. A satirical allusion to Popery never came amiss, whatever chronology might object to it.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.



INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

TROILUS and Cressida, I opine, was a favourite bantling of the gentle Willy's—one of the plays he wrote for himself. Indeed it betrays unequivocal marks of indulgence, being somewhat naughty, capricious, whimsical, loquacious, fond, unruly—a thing of many humours, and as like its father as it can stare—a veritable spoiled child. The opposite points of Shakspeare's genius, the fanciful, flowery-scented, many-hued, amorous tenderness of the Venus and Adonis, and the self-involved, self-fathoming, world-expounding philosophy of Hamlet, in this strange drama, blend their commingled rays. Who but Shakspeare would or could have extracted thoughts deep as the centre, politic maxims fit to rule a planet, truths that are the very substance of prudential wisdom, out of a light love tale? What would an Aristarchus, wont to read Homer, not only by the clear day-light of common

sense, but through the glimmering perspective of French criticism, who has taken it for granted that Homer meant Achilles for a hero, a superhuman personification of noble energy, whose very sulkiness was awful, and his cruelty sublime,—what would such a blear-eyed idolator of his own misconceptions think of Shakspeare's Achilles—a creature with a womanish soul in a huge carcase, vain as a fine singer, and fearful of making his cut-throat accomplishments cheap by using? Shakspeare had no veneration for heroes. He understood them too well. It is remarkable that he has scarce adopted a single expression from the “Troilus and Creseide” of Chaucer, the most beautiful diary of love ever written. The work of Lollius* (if it ever existed) is not to be found. I am disposed to think that Chaucer, in disowning the invention of this sweet poem, only followed the common practice of the minstrels.

CONCLUDING NOTICE.

On what authority does Schlegel assert that Troilus and Cressida was never acted? It is difficult indeed to imagine how any audience could have listened to such long discourses of policy, devoid of all but intellectual interest, or how they could be satisfied with a conclusion wherein nothing is concluded. But the same objections apply to other plays which certainly were acted—with what success

* Mr. Pope, after Dryden, informs us that the story of “Troilus and Cressida” was originally the work of one Lollius, a Lombard.

I know not. The Germans have a knack of writing history scientifically—they deduce facts from premises with as much complacency as if they were conclusions in mood and figure, or elements in an algebraic process; they determine that what must have been, always has been. They succeed perfectly in demolishing the foundations of historic dogmatism; but then they are too often dogmatically hypothetical. Schlegel, however, understands the drift of *Troilus and Cressida* perfectly. But it has been better expressed by S. T. C.—“Compare Nestor, Ajax, Achilles, &c., in the *Troilus and Cressida* of Shakspeare, with their namesakes in the *Iliad*. The old heroes seem all to have been at school ever since.” Not a very good school, however. Their improvement is intellectual only—morally they are the same, and therefore worse.

CYMBELINE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICES.

MAY it not plausibly be conjectured that Shakspeare, by making causeless jealousy the foundation of so many plays, intended an oblique compliment to Queen Elizabeth—a delicate vindication of Anna Bullen?

Lovely as the poetry of *Cymbeline* is, and most lovely as *Imogen* is, this play is, to me, one of the least agreeable in the collection. Nowhere, not

even in Leontes, is the odiousness of jealousy displayed in such glaring colours as in Posthumus, who, in plain terms, acts a villain's part. A man who could lay wagers upon his wife's virtue, and wilfully expose her to the insults of such a ribald-scoundrel as Iachimo, is not only unworthy of Imogen, but richly deserving of the worst possible consequences of his folly. Shakspeare wisely conceives jealousy to be a passion pre-existent to the occasions it is sure to find or seek. Iachimo is a scamp, utterly unredeemed by the master mind and soldierly carriage of Iago and Edmund. The beautiful poetry he is made to utter in Imogen's chamber, could scarce have emanated from such a reptile spirit. Cloten is a mere ass, without humour, or even fun. Shakspeare has not another such. It is, however, a just and natural judgment upon the subtle witch, his mother, to have borne such a moon-calf. These amazing clever, wicked women, generally produce Clotens—witness Semiramis, Agrippina, and Catherine the Second.

ACT I., SCENE I.

As Dr. Johnson allows commentators to differ concerning the opening speech of Cymbeline, without animosity or shame, I hope I shall not offend his *manes* by proposing my own interpretation of this contested passage.

Our bloods, *i. e.*, our natural complexions, are not more swayed by sympathy with the planetary bodies than our courtiers' (bloods or humours) seem to sym-

pathise with the blood or humour of the king. The notion is derived from the humoral pathology and astrological physiology. The disposition of men was supposed to be regulated by the crisis of their blood, which again was influenced by spherical predominance. Tyrwhitt's alteration is plausible, and makes the construction easier, but less Shakspearian. The Doctor's paraphrase is absolutely untenable.*

Imo.—"Ho, who 's here?
If anything that 's civil, speak; if savage,
Take, or lend."—ACT III., SCENE VI.

The text is probably right. Shakspeare does not plan his sentences beforehand, and lay them out in even compartments; they grow and expand, like trees, towards heaven. If you be civil, speak; nay, but however savage, at least assist me for recompense.

Imo.—"His foot mercurial," &c.—ACT IV., SCENE II.

Shakspeare seldom, very seldom, repeats himself; but certainly this mythological dissection is very like

* Dr. Johnson observes that this passage is so difficult, that commentators may differ concerning it without animosity or shame; that the lines stand as they were originally written, and that a paraphrase such as the licentious and abrupt expressions of our author too frequently require, will make emendation unnecessary. "We do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods,"—our countenances, which in popular speech are said to be regulated by our blood—"no more obey the laws of heaven"—which direct us to appear what we really are—"than our courtiers,"—that is, than the blood of our courtiers: but our bloods, like theirs, "still seem as doth the king's." Mr. Steevens is of opinion that blood is here used for *inclination*; and Mr. Tyrwhitt proposes to make the passage clear by a very slight alteration, leaving out the last letters: You do not meet a man but frowns; our bloods no more obey the heavens, than our courtiers still seem as the king does.

Hamlet's description of his father. In Hamlet, however, not only is the *τόπος* better made out, but the application is much more natural and forcible. Here, considering that the mercurial foot, herculean brawns, &c., belong in reality to Cloten, Shakspeare's intention probably was to show how much the eyes are fools of the mind, and how completely passion makes the beauty or deformity it loves or loathes.

“ Solemn music,” &c.—ACT V., SCENE IV.

Stephens, following the opinion of Pope, is for rejecting the ghosts and their woful ballad measure. Schlegel, whom I should take to be a stanch believer in the apocryphal Rowley, gives a very ingenious, but not very convincing, argument in their favour,—to wit, that Posthumus's friends were poor men of a former age, and are purposely made to speak in a more obsolete style. In the measure, too, in which the old translators make Virgil's ghosts talk, there might indeed be a reason for making the dream-spectres talk as unlike other persons as might be. It would certainly be rash to mark these verses with a †, but they are as little like Shakspeare as anything that goes under his name. It is not improbable that they may have been remodelled from some old ballad; for Shakspeare was little scrupulous of using anything that would serve. The prophetic table is much in the style of Merlin: but, blessed me—“ mollis air,” for “ mulier”,*—what a piece of cabala!

* “ Be embraced by a piece of *tender air*,” mollis air, mulier!

KING LEAR.

Fool.—“Here ’s my cockscomb,” &c.—ACT I., SCENE IV.

NATURE, Time, and Fashion are all great parodists. Thus horns, which the ancients esteemed a type of divinity; which the son of Ammon adopted on his coins; which a prophet (a false one indeed) put on his head to oblige a king (but in that he was not unique), 1 Kings, xxii. 11; the ornaments of altars, the emblems of abundance and of salvation, have come to denote cuckoldom. In like manner the fool is little aware, that his cockscomb was heretofore the regal diadem of the Achæmenides. Yet, so it was. *Κυρβασία* indifferently signifies the ornament of the Persian bird, and of the Persian king: Aristophanes in *Avibus*. (486.) Yet higher authority might be adduced for the bells.

Lear.—“Who stock’d my servant,” &c.—ACT II., SCENE II.

“For your own honesty, which is virgin.”—*The Loyal Subject*.

The logic, if it may be so called, is much alike in these passages; but there is more truth in Shakspeare. The virginity of honesty is a mere metaphor. The old age of the heavens is something more. Besides, I suspect a pun in Fletcher, for in the language of the time. honesty, applied to woman, implied virginity, or conjugal chastity, in which sense it was supplanted by the more aristocratic term, honour. Honesty, now confined to the sense of practical integrity in money matters, anciently signified the moral *καλον*; hence the distinctive virtue of sex or office.

ROMEO AND JULIET.



INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

SHAKSPEARE has written better plays than *Romeo and Juliet*, but perhaps he never achieved a work of more harmonious unison. The same spirit of rashness, and infatuation, the same predominance of the present, and recklessness of the future, the same continuity of fancy, and inconstancy of will, appear alike in the aged and the young, the menial and the noble; the passionate *Romeo*, and the vilipending *Mercutio*. There is an absence of reason and calculation from beginning to end. The loves of *Romeo and Juliet* are every whit as rational as the hatred of their respective parents. *Friar Laurence* and the *Nurse* are beings of the same order; each acting, as they conceive, for the best;—the heart is as good in one as the other, the cultivation of intellect alone gives the superiority to the *Franciscan*. The progress from light, fanciful comedy to intense tragedy is managed with exquisite art. In the deeper passages, we feel the sacredness of human purpose, the fatality of a self-determined wilfulness—the majesty of passion. There is a love that oversteps all conventional rules, to become a law and religion to itself. The suicide of the lovers no more offends the moral sense, than that of *Lucretia* or of *Cato*. It is a sweet poem, like the song of the nightingale oscillating betwixt mirth and sadness, sorrow dallying with its own tender fancies.

Rom.—"By a name," &c.—ACT II., SCENE II.

"If 't be my name that doth thee so offend,
 No more myself shall be my own name's friend;—
 Say 'tis accursed and fatal, and dispraise it,
 If written, blot it : if engraven, rase it."—DRAYTON :
England's Heroical Epistles, Henry to Rosamond.

The number of passages in Drayton's "Heroical Epistles," almost identical with lines of Shakspeare, prove that the one must have been indebted to the other. I would accuse neither of plagiarism. Property was hardly acknowledged in Parnassus at that time. There might be no deception meant;—marginal acknowledgments were not then appended to plays or poems. It was taken for granted, that every writer availed himself of whatever was to his purpose. These resemblances, however, are for the most part in those early plays of Shakspeare, which might have been written before 1593,—the date, according to Dr. Anderson, of Drayton's "Heroical Epistles," the style of which throughout, both in the fashion of the language, and constitution of the thought, is more Shakspearian than any I am acquainted with. What a pity that none of Drayton's plays are extant. What they might be in point of plot is hard to say ; but in the *λεξις* and *διανοια*, I doubt not they were truly dramatic. The Merry Devil of Edmonton* does not read like him. It has none of the impassioned sententiousness of his epistles, which are a kind of monodrame.

* See Lamb's Specimens of Dramatic Poets, Vol. II., p. 59.

ACT. III., SCENE II.

That the conceits in this scene are suitable to tragedy I cannot maintain; but they have a smack of nature. The mind, surprised by sorrow in the midst of playful delights, will not immediately change its tune:—the confusion of feelings will produce an antic blending of thoughts, a dance of death.

ACT III., SCENE V.

Lady Cap.—“ We will have vengeance for it,” &c.

The perfect *nonchalance* with which this horrid proposition is uttered by a respectable matron proves how familiar were the minds and ears of our virtuous ancestors to deeds at which their demoralised posterity would thrill with horror. It might, however, be Shakspeare's art to make the old Capulets unamiable, that our sympathy with Juliet might be the less distracted by disapprobation of her disobedience. Capulet's speech is about the worst that Shakspeare ever wrote. But for a model of parental rebuke and paternal despotism, I recommend the old gent's behaviour to his daughter throughout the scene. Shakspeare must have intended to show the vulgarity of rage; and true it is, a man in a passion is never a gentleman—much less is a woman a lady. There may be noble anger, as in Brutus; but then it must be just, and not exceed the bounds of self-possession. Even Brutus forgets himself a little when irritated by the intrusion of the men.

CONCLUDING NOTICE.

There is something hasty and inconsiderate in these last scenes. Perhaps no human genius can grapple with such aggregated disaster. Words cannot express the horror of such judicial calamities which overswell the capacity of conscious grief, and must needs produce madness or stupefaction, or, likely enough, demoniac scorn and laughter. The reconciliation of the parents seems to me more moral than natural. I doubt if real hatred is ever cured. As for the golden statues, they are not so good a monument as the sweetbriars growing from the common grave of hapless lovers in so many old ballads. Garrick has certainly deepened and humanised the pathos by making Juliet awake before Romeo dies, which, I believe, is according to the original story. Shakspeare followed an English poem. There was a play on the same story as early as 1562.

 OTHELLO.

GENERAL NOTICE.

FOR once, Shakspeare and perfection are united. From the first scene to the last of this play there is a perpetuity of interest. Some gaps of time there may be. We must allow a few hours, say seven days, for the passage between Venice and Cyprus. Set that down for the prologue of the play. Then it will appear to be the most perfect specimen of tragedy now extant.

MARGINALIA.

NOTES ON ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S LIVES
OF HOGARTH AND REYNOLDS.

These Notes may be compared with the Essays entitled, Ignoramus on the Fine Arts. They appear to have been written about the same time, and take up the subject where it is left in the last of these lively and characteristic compositions.

NOTES ON ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S LIVES
OF HOGARTH AND REYNOLDS.

HOGARTH.

INTRODUCTION.

Page 9.—“In the background, St. George appears in the air, combating with the dragon, while Cleodelinda kneels in prayer beside a lamb.”

Is this the legendary name of the heroine whom Spenser has converted into heavenly Una with her milk-white lamb? In the Seven Champions I think she is called Zara. By the way, I see no reason to fancy that the dragon was either the devil or Athanasius, any more than that St. George himself was a Cappadocian bacon-dealer, or the archangel St. Michael. The virgin exposed to the monster was a frequent incident in the Greek romance, witness the tales of Perseus and Andromeda, Hercules and Hesione. The legend-makers of the Church followed the example of the Greeks and Romans, ascribing to local saints every stray wonder that at all agreed with their accorded characters. Probably a real George had been a military saint, and, in consequence, a

fit successor to the forfeited glories of profane fiction. In Popery and Paganism I believe much has been allegorised; but that little was, in its first digestion, either allegorical or symbolical, except the physiological pantheism brought from Egypt and the East.

Page 13.—“The blunt rustics and illiterate nobles who composed the torrent which swept away the long-established glories of the papal church, confounded the illuminated volumes of poets and philosophers with the superstitious offspring of the Lady of the Seven Hills.”

The rustics were blunt destructives enough; the nobles, with a few exceptions, unprincipled plunderers. It may be true that these were the operatives of the Reformation; but they should not be confounded with the reforming divines, who, though not very polite, were certainly not illiterate. The illuminations and the literature which perished might have some historical value, but is probably no great loss in any other respect. There is more good poetry than any body can read as it is; much more school divinity than will ever be read again. But the destruction of the abbeys is really to be regretted, difficult as it seems, under a Protestant establishment, to turn them to any religious purpose.

Page 16.—“In a better informed age, John Evelyn, a gentleman of taste and talents, pronounced the heathen atrocities of Verrio, in Windsor Castle, sublime compositions, and their painter the first of mankind!”

And did not Locke consider Blackmore the first

of poets? But gentlemen of more taste than Locke, more genius and philosophy than Evelyn, are very uncertain witnesses to the state of art or morals in their times. Their works may be relied on, but their testimony is little worth. I care for no man's judgment of his contemporaries. The effect of a work upon the age, the general heart of the people, is worth any critical judgment. Prophecies of immortality, bodings of oblivion, go for nothing with me.

Page 17.—“They were numbered with the common menials of the court; they had their livery suit, their yearly dole, and their weekly wages.”

That certain painters were numbered with the menials of the court is true; many particulars as to their mode of payment, &c., have been transcribed from the old household books by Collier and others; but neither to be a menial of the court, nor to receive weekly wages, was then derogatory to higher rank than art of itself ever conferred. Besides, I believe the painters in question were not artists but artisans; their business was to paint coats of arms, and to furnish devices for the court pageants. This was also the proper function of the serjeant painter. Wilkes was not so very far wrong in confounding the office of serjeant and of house-painter. When the palace was to be painted with representations of anything real or imaginary, doubtless the serjeant painter had to superintend the workmen, as well as to draw the design.

Page 20.—“He (Henry VIII.) was sensible of the lustre which literature and art cast upon the throne; he saw the rival kings of France and Spain marching to battle or to negotiation with poets and painters in their trains, and he envied not a little the unattainable brilliancy of their courts.”

Of what poet was Charles the Fifth a patron? Had Henry been as cruel and sensual as he has been represented, he might nevertheless have delighted in, and appreciated the arts. A tyrant may be an Augustus; an infidel hypocrite a Leo: a Mæcenas may be no pattern of the domestic virtues.

ON ALLEGORICAL PAINTING.

Page 34.—“Those allegorical histories are empty representations of themselves, the supporters of nothing but clumsy forms and clumsier conceits,” &c.

This remark requires limitation. Allegory may be painted. A Spenser gallery, as Hazlitt observes, would make one of the finest subjects in the world. Dante, the Pilgrim's Progress, the tale of Psyche, the Judgment of Hercules, all might supply admirable pictures. But allegory should be kept to itself; an allegorical portrait, or history-piece, is absurd. But I must take a wider space to explain the difference. These metaphors, such as *nuda veritas*, green virginity, &c., should not be painted.

ON PORTRAIT PAINTING.

Page 36.—“ He (Vandyke) has been equalled in freedom by Reynolds, and surpassed in the fascination of female loveliness by Lawrence; but no one has yet equalled him in manly dignity, in the rare and important gift of endowing his heads with power to think and act.”

A portrait painter, idealise as he will, can only paint the sort of people that exist in his time. Vandyke had not the lovely faces of Lawrence's sitters to imitate; and neither Reynolds nor Lawrence had the hard-thinkers and chivalric enterprisers of King Charles's day for models. The race is extinct; we have men of genius not a few—men of courage as many as ever;—but poetry is become too feminine, war too mechanical to enlarge the brow, and stamp the lineaments with the proportions and traces of the olden time. The male dress to which Vandyke has given name was a great advantage to him. A portrait should be in the dress of the time and country—yet how unhappy in this respect was Reynolds.

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

Page 40.—“ The Puritans affected to despise those productions, because they wished to insult the king's memory.”

I certainly think the Puritans would have been right had they condemned such pictures only as presumed to give a visible representation of the Infinite and Invisible. But since the Second Person

of the Trinity did condescend to assume the likeness of man, there appears no just reason why his human lineaments should not be painted. Far less can I comprehend why the loveliest productions of the art, which pourtray

"The maid and mother undefiled,"

should excite suspicion in any Christian soul.

Page 47.—"To the coming of Kneller some writers have attributed the death of Lely."

Lely died in his grand climacteric, for he was born 1617, died 1680. This is an age at which a man may die without either poison or jealousy. But old men do not like to be outdone.

Page 48.—"He painted Dryden in his own hair, in plain drapery, holding a laurel, and made him a present of the work. The poet repaid him by an epistle containing encomiums such as few painters deserve."

Dryden's encomium on Kneller is good. If it ascribes to Sir Godfrey what few painters deserve, it shows a just idea of what the art is capable. Pope's epitaph is *outré*. The second couplet is the best, for it is peculiar; few painters record two ages: but Pope has bestowed his incense upon Jervas, whom Allan Cunningham has never mentioned. Kneller was born at Lubec, 1648; died 1723, aged 75. Whatever in Addison's offering (which was meant for King George the First, not for Kneller) is not taken from Dryden, is mere persiflage. But it records the courtly and

extensive field of Kneller's labours. Prior compliments not Sir Godfrey, but the Duke of Ormonde. Congreve is more moderate and sensible.

Page 49.—“I am aware that there is a certain air of stiffness in the portraits of Holbein, that several of Vandyke's are unequal to his talents, that Lely is loose, and many of his pictures unlike, and that Kneller exhibits much sameness, and very little imagination.”

How can it be ascertained that Lely's pictures were unlike? I never, as far as I know, saw a picture of Holbein's. Vandyke, Lely, and Kneller, I must have seen at Windsor, but they made no impression. Their merits may be various, but their fame would certainly be less, did they not illustrate the most interesting period of our history, and give an image to the highest names. Statesmen in their days might be bad things—now they are mere things—or, rather, no-things.

Page 64.—“Lord Orford considered all men as uninformed who had not received an university education.”

Little as I admire Lord Orford, I do not think these strictures altogether just. He might consider men without classical attainments as uneducated, but not therefore uninformed. He must have known that the mind of a Hogarth could not but be rich in ideas, and well stored with facts and observations. If he depreciated Hogarth's acquirements, he did no worse by him than others have done by Shakspeare and even Burns, and probably out of the same appe-

tite for wonder-making. I suspect his lordship's conversation was to the full as gross, as full of allusions, and *double entendre*, and prurient scandal, generally draped in French idioms, as that of Hogarth. But then Hogarth would call things by their English names. It is, however, no wonder that any man of northern descent, and plebeian associations, should appear gross to Horace, and that such grossness should be an unpardonable offence in the eyes of one who, having neither virtue, religion, nor honesty, was not a rascal, only because he was a gentleman. We can hardly think that Hogarth was destitute of agreeable qualifications, or how could he fix the affection of a female not unacquainted with refined life? But love is a great polisher, and too often the Cimon relapses after the honeymoon.

I repent the harshness of my censure on Horace Walpole. I have since read much good of him.

Page 70.—"Kindness shown to genius at the commencement of its career is seldom forgotten."

Too often, especially if the benefactor, on the strength of his benefaction, begins to advise, rebuke, and direct; or if he be an unfashionable old Quiz. I am far from saying that men of genius are naturally ungrateful; but they are too frequently vain, proud, testy, and suspicious. Like other men, however, they are better and longer pleased with kindness, sweet words, and smiling looks, and ready welcome, than with substantial services which they are unable to

repay in kind, and begrudge to pay in homage, deference, and unremitting attention. Gratitude is a delightful sentiment, but, alas, how often is it a grievous duty!

Page 77.—“The calm, contemplative look, the elegance of form without the grace of action,” &c.

Elegance and grace are here properly distinguished. Grace certainly implies motion. What is elegant cannot indeed be ungraceful; but what is graceful is not necessarily elegant. Much grace may occasionally be observed in rustics and grisettes, but only ladies can be elegant.

Page 78.—“Compared with the productions of the great masters of the art of portraiture, those of Hogarth are alike distinguished for their vigorous coarseness and their literal nature.”

I do not think that Hogarth would have failed in the delineation of living beauty, especially if it were of the florid and voluptuous cast. Lamb speaks highly of his portrait of Peg Woffington, and I have seen a bad copy of his Lavinia Fenton (Polly Peachum), which makes the passion of the Duke of Bolton no mystery. There is a full length of Lord Somebody, which looks as well as any mere gentleman in the old court dress need do. But he certainly wanted elegance. His beauties are hardly gentlewomen. Used to represent figures in action or strong passion, he failed in giving expression to repose.

Page 80.—“Hogarth’s portrait of Henry Fielding, executed after death from recollection, is remarkable as being the only likeness extant of the prince of English novelists.”

Fielding’s portrait is so very like the novelist that one half suspects its likeness to the man. The same observation applies to Reynolds’s Sterne, which is obviously compounded of Yorick and Tristram Shandy.*

Page 81.—“Captain Coram, the projector of the Foundling Hospital, sat for his portrait to Hogarth, and it is one of the best he ever painted.”

I well remember this portrait. It is in Smollett’s “History of England.” Poor Coram little foresaw a time when his benevolent institution would be censured by the loudest professors of philanthropy. Most philanthropists have strong harsh features.

Page 83.—“For his Garrick as Richard the Third, he had £200.”

I cannot think this portrait one of Hogarth’s happy works. It is, as Hazlitt says of Sir Joshua’s

* Hogarth’s portrait of Lovat is, like his portraits of Fielding and of Bainbridge the jailer, in the Committee, and of Charteris and Mother Needham, in “The Harlot’s Progress,”—like Reynolds’s Sterne (which is Yorick, with a smatch of Tristram), and the “Louis XI.,” in the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, so very like the character, that I doubt its likeness to the person. The soul is seldom quite so visible in nature. I do not, however, find the least fault with the painter who thus intensifies and sublimates the physiognomical indications, and teaches others to see what he sees himself, idealising the character, as the painter of grace and beauty must idealise the form and feature. Lovat probably did look sometimes as villainous in the Highlands as in Hogarth’s sketch. In such a case there was no danger of overstepping the modesty of nature.

Mrs. Siddons, neither Garrick nor Richard, a defect which besets theatrical portraits in general. For Richard it is too handsome, and there wants the wild, supernatural terror of Shakspeare. The expression is that of bodily pain—more gout than ghost about it. It does not tell its own story. But yet it must be a fine picture.

Page 88.—“The Harlot's Progress was commenced in 1731.”

“What reflections does it awake,” observes Charles Lamb, speaking of the harlot's funeral, “of the dreadful heartless state in which the creature, a female, too, must have lived, who in death wants the accompaniment of one genuine tear.”

I cannot help agreeing with Ireland, that the face of her who is closing the coffin of her poor sister in iniquity expresses, or rather suppresses, some feeling, at least so much as prompts an inward “I shall come to this:” little enough, but all she dare to feel. The figure is one of the most beautiful Hogarth ever drew.

In some particulars of this print Hogarth has confounded two styles, which for the present we may designate the Cervantic and the Rabelaisian—dramatic satire and burlesque satire. The characters are copies of real life, not exaggerated, but brought out; while the accompaniments, the mourning drapery, the scutcheon, &c., are utterly absurd if we suppose any imitation of a real street-walker's funeral intended. This is not a common fault with Hogarth. Fielding has fallen into it in Jonathan Wild. Massinger and Ford perpetually in their comic parts. Shakspeare only just escapes it in Pistol.

The print may be regarded as the satyricon appended to a fearful tragedy.

Page 89.—“ One of them—a polished personage, who moved in polite circles—still bore the brand of Pope when he was pilloried to everlasting infamy by Hogarth.”

I never heard that Charteris was a polished person. As a money-lender he might have many acquaintances among the nobility and gentry. I dare say he knew how to make himself useful, and many young bloods, whose titles guaranteed their caste, might pamper their vanity with the reputation of knowing the first villain of the age. The conventional morals of the present age are certainly more decorous than those of 1730; yet there are still youths of fashion who court the acquaintance of the swell-mob and the fancy, and very equivocal characters who have money to lend, or the power of amusing, are not universally shunned even by the makers of manners. But that Charteris was, in the technical phrase, admitted into society, that he had the *entrée* of any respectable house, is quite incredible.

Page 91.—“ Either Hogarth's obscurity, says Nichols, was his protection from the lash of Pope, or perhaps the bard was too prudent to exasperate a painter who had already given such proofs of his ability in satire.”

In the Epistle to Arbuthnot, published about this time, Pope records among his provocations—

“ The libelled person and the pictured shape.”

Hogarth's Burlington Gate is a worthless affair. Vulgarly and obscurity were not, in general, protections against Pope's satire, and he was by no means shy of the subject in question; in the Epistle he speaks of those "who to the dean and silver bell can swear," and, in a note, flatly denies the story of the 1,000*l.* But his enemies had not such an opinion of his veracity as to desist from a report on his bare denial. It is not improbable that Pope shrunk from a contest with one whom he could not answer in his own way. There is nothing which little men dread so much as the exposure of their personal infirmities. Pope's satire, moreover, was only for the few; Hogarth might have stuck him up in every print-shop, and made every carman and pickpocket familiar with his crookedness.

Churchill, ungainly as his figure was, had no such apprehension, but he was backed by the *vox populi*.

Page 94.—"An inscription which accompanies these historical paintings in the Hospital, intimates that they were finished and presented by our artist in 1736."

I have often remarked this picture on the Hospital stairs, where it is so placed that one cannot see it. Though in bad preservation, it shows Hogarth's power as a colourist. But he should have let Scripture alone. His religious pictures have no devotion, no faith, in them. It is not enough to represent a Bible-history as it might have appeared in real life. Very possibly St. Peter might have looked very like

a Jew, and St. Matthew retain some traits of the receipt of custom. But an artist should paint up to the desire of the mind—should gratify the affections and conform to the reverence of a pious mind. His representations should accord with the feelings which Christians connect with the symbolic acts of the fathers and founders of their faith. Everything should be ideal, symbolical, instinct with Divinity. The sacred unction should flow even to the skirts of the garment; even the landscape, the buildings, the furniture and still-life, should be sublimed by a devout imagination. The palm-trees should lift their heads in an air consecrated by angel voices. The burning bush should not be copied from the next thicket, nor Jonah's gourd be sketched in the garden. I cannot better explain myself than by saying that the adjuncts of a religious picture should be as thoroughly permeated with the spirit of the action, as those of Hogarth's satires are with his peculiar humour and the characteristic expression of the scene. Thus in *Gin Lane*, as Charles Lamb said, the very houses are drunk. Much of this must be imparted by the imagination of the beholder. There are no precise rules for drawing religious stools, or trees, or animals; but then it is only a true artist that can communicate to the imagination the fitting *clinamen*. Some modern, and some even of the Italian painters, are as much too pretty, too amiable, too Greek, or, it may be, too English, in their delineations of Scripture characters, as Hogarth is too gross and literal. The Flemings are a great deal too Flemish; Catholic

pictures are often more Catholic than Scriptural, but still they have a tincture of devotion, though it is not devotion of the purest order. Neither poets nor painters have been sufficiently careful to distinguish the Greek from the Hebrew Genius, the sacred from the mythological. Others substitute bigness for grandeur, and think to attain the ideal by arbitrary departure from nature and common sense. They aim at breadth by the omission of detail, and, instead of developing the parts from the whole, slur over the parts altogether. This may not be always amiss in mythological or allegorical subjects, but it is highly so in Scripture pieces, which should never lose the air of reality—should always look like facts;—not mere fancies, but facts representative of everlasting truths.

Page 102.—“The persons who crowd the eight busy scenes of the Rake's Progress are not so well known; many are believed to be portraits.”

It is not, I think, difficult to guess which among Hogarth's persons are portraits; but he almost always makes the portrait of the individual the representative of the species. The pilfering scrivener in the first scene—the parson in the Marriage—Captain Stab in the Levee, whom he introduces again in the Masquerade-ticket—the projector in the Fleet-prison—are obviously from nature; but then it remained for Hogarth to bring out the inner man, and make the whole life apparent in a single act. The rake himself does not preserve the *ὅμοιον* in person,

nor completely in character. He is best in the Fleet. The deserted damsel might easily have been prettier.

Page 104.—“One Huggins, the friend of Hogarth, drew the act,” &c.

This Huggins, the son of that cruel keeper of Newgate who was prosecuted along with Bainbridge, had the insolence to translate “Ariosto.” There is a story of his presenting Smollett, the editor of the “Critical Review,” with a haunch of venison, and obtaining a favourable notice in consequence, which the critic, on the story getting wind, had the impudent baseness to retract. He also translated Dante, but never published the translation; and composed the Oratorio of Judith, immortalised by Hogarth’s sonorous Music-piece, in which you can actually discern in what key each performer is singing;—the bass, the treble, the counter-tenor, the soprano, are all both visible and audible.

Page 106.—“The Sleeping Congregation, in which a heavy parson is promoting, with all the alacrity of dulness, the slumber of a respectable, but singular auditory, is very clever.”

Hogarth is certainly the most audible of painters, as Dante is the most visible of poets. The soporific drawl of the parson—said to represent Desaguliers—and the whole gamut of snores in the congregation rise from the print like a steam of rich distilled perfume.

Page 107.—“The second design is that of the Distressed Poet,” &c.

The poet's wife is perhaps the most loveable figure that ever Hogarth drew; while the milk-woman has as little milkiness about her as if she had been suckled on blue ruin and brimstone.

Page 107.—“Southwark Fair, another early work, but for which there is no certain date, is one of his most elaborate performances. It is, however, too crowded, and wants what all his other works have, that central point of attraction,” &c.

Ireland gives 1733 as the date of the Fair. I do not think Allan's objection well-founded. The female drummer is the central point of attraction,—a perfect histrionic romance in herself. Of the other figures none are very remarkable. Perhaps the bailiffs are the best. But few pictures present a scene more vividly to the senses. You see the Fair, you hear the Fair, you almost smell the Fair. The Fall of Bajazet is almost too serious a matter.

Page 108.—“Of Modern Midnight Conversation, which famous piece we now come to, it is said by Ireland that most of the figures are portraits.”

Was it the custom of Hogarth's day for clergy to preside at midnight conversations in full pontificalibus? or is the invincible-noddled divine invested with gown and cassock by the same poetic license which, in old illuminated manuscripts, portrayed

kings as lying in bed with their crowns and sceptres? Judge Kettleby is also in his wig and bar-gown—a leering confutation of the adage, "*In vino veritas.*" A lake of punch as large as Ontario would not extract a moment's honesty from his lips or his soul. Drunkenness only intensifies his rascality. His triumphant scoundrelism rides like a victorious bark, with all her tackle and her streaming bravery on the topmost wave of ebriety. What a contrast to the drunken pathetic of his weeping client, from whose eyes the vapours of the punch are distilling as fast as ever did the *cratur* from forbidden still! Yet better, if possible, is the crafty man (Amherst?) and his roguish insolence helping the liquor. The grave citizen smoking in his nightcap, silent as the grave, and seeming of as capacious a swallow, contrasts admirably with the noisy members of the club, even as the silent Ariadne of Titian with the rout of Bacchanals. This print is a peculiar favourite in France and Germany. It was the first Hogarth I remember. It was at Charles Lamb's rooms.

Page 110.—"The next work of Hogarth was the Enraged Musician. . . . It seems impossible to increase his annoyance by the addition of any other din, save the braying of an ass, which Cowper says is the only unmusical sound in *nature.*"

I cannot agree with Cowper. There are more unmusical sounds in nature than the braying of an ass, which, to me, has something joyous in it; *e. g.* the caterwauling of a cat, the squeak of a pig being ringed,

the nocturnal dialogue of two chained dogs howling responsive, the screech of an owl, the roaring of a spoiled boy, and, at some times, the crowing of a cock,—than which nothing can be more annoying to an invalid just dropping into a doze. Talking of spoiled boys, the figure which Allan Cunningham calls a French drummer is evidently a little pampered and bedizened wretch, indulged to his own utter misery, and the torment of all about him. This figure is the only satirical hit in the whole. The Enraged Musician is the most purely comic of all Hogarth's works,—I was going to say, the most purely good-natured ; but I am afraid the artist, who certainly begrudged the lavish rewards of foreign musicians, took a malicious delight in the torments of the poor Frenchman.

Page 112.—“ The Four Times of the Day, in four prints, were the next works that appeared. The first scene is called Morning. An old maiden lady, prim, withered, miserly and morose, is walking to church.”

Cowper has translated the Old Maid into verse with great success ; but the fearful denunciation at the close is in bad taste, of which there is much more in Cowper's early couplet poems than in the Task. Fielding has also adopted this unlovely specimen of Eve's flesh as the likeness of Miss Bridget Allworthy. Morning is one of the very best of Hogarth's prints : it makes one shiver to look at it.

Page 114.—“ The second scene is Noon.”

Noon is capital, too,—particularly the miniature

beau, and the yet more diminutive old man in the Welsh wig. What expression in the stream of bucks! Hogarth had doubtless observed how very self-satisfied, happy, and benevolent, people always look when coming out of church. The damsel with the dish is a beauty of Hogarth's school. You feel that she is pretty, though her picture is but ordinary.

Page 115.—"The third is Afternoon, and the hour five o'clock."

Evening, which Hazlitt did not like, is rather ill-natured; but still it is worth anything. What a woman! what little cockatrices of children!—the girl her mother's own—the boy may be his papa's: he is quite as soft, but not yet quite so patient. What helpless misery in the poor citizen's countenance; and what a sweltering afternoon!—what an atmosphere of punch and tobacco! Such, we are to believe, are the Sabbath rustications of London's traders. Had Hogarth shown, on other occasions, a more decided affection for the orthodox, we might conjecture that the print was meant to satirise Sabbath-breaking recreations. Pictures so derogatory to human nature should not, I think, be set forth without some definite purpose. Hogarth did not love children. Perhaps he was vexed that he had none himself. I hardly recollect one child meant to be pleasing in all his original works. There is, indeed, a fine arch little rascal in the picture of Sancho's Feast—the best in the Quixote series.

Page 115.—“The fourth scene is Night.”

Night is not much in the print, but it may exhibit fine effects of light and shade in the painting. What rare blackguards the boys are!

Page 116.—“The next production was the Strolling Actresses.”

I have no doubt that the intention of the Strolling Actresses was to ridicule the mythological school of painting; especially the French and Flemish, where gods and goddesses were draped—where draped at all—*à la Louis Quatorze*. I suspect the Rubens' at the Luxembourg Gallery were not altogether out of Hogarth's thoughts. The absurd jumble of heathen and Christian emblems in some allegorical pieces is not overlooked, and the two little devils fighting for a porter-pot on an altar explain themselves more clearly than reverently. It is an allusion common in Rabelais. There is more of Pantagruelism in this than in any other of Hogarth's works; but his genius was not Lucianic or Rabelaisian. I cannot think quite so ill of it as Charles Lamb and S. T. Coleridge did; but it has less imagination and less truth than the author generally exhibits, and only satirising an obsolete absurdity has lost whatever meaning it ever possessed. It is, however, a glorious jumble. It could not glance at the acted mysteries. Satire on a folly two centuries dead would be neither humorous nor intelligible. The operas and English pantomimes probably suggested a part of the ridicule. It is an

amusing scene ; but very far from deserving the commendation of Horace Walpole. Much of its piquancy may be lost by the lapse of time. Some, at least, of the figures are, most likely, portraits of living theatrical characters ; perhaps more are caricature copies from ornamental pictures. The Diana does not look like a virgin goddess : she is, in truth, a Venus, but not Venus Urania. Juno has something of the character of that celestial shrew—the most unamiable personage on Olympus. The Tragic Muse is the three Eumenides in one. Night is old, but not venerable.

Page 124.—“ Of this work (Marriage à-la-Mode) Dr. Shebbeare formed a novel, called The Marriage Act ; and the author of the Clandestine Marriage found the story of his drama in its scenes.”

I never saw Shebbeare's novel, but the story of the “ Clandestine Marriage ” has no other relation to the Marriage à-la-Mode than as it includes the purposed union of a man of quality with a citizen's daughter. But Sterling, with his grand tours, and his hot rolls and butter, is a much more genial character than Hogarth's Alderman, whose utter unfeelingness in the last scene is odious and improbable. On the whole the Marriage à-la-Mode is perhaps the most perfect of Hogarth's performances, though the murder scene is hardly equal to the rest. The likeness of the two principal persons is admirably preserved, and yet more admirably are the expressions varied. To sustain a character *qualis ab incepto*, through a series of adventures, is no slight achievement ; but to exhibit it as *alter et idem*—to

make the identity inviolate, and yet to portray the changes of time, passion, circumstance, is a work of genius vouchsafed to few. Now Hogarth, in the *Harlot's and Rake's Progress*, though he fits the expression admirably to the given scene, has not perfectly preserved the identity of feature. He seems to have worked after different models. The *Rake*, in particular, is very unlike himself in his successive stages. But, in the *Marriage à-la-Mode*, he has converted the sullen, petted, city school-girl, into the dissipated woman of fashion; and the overgrown, coxcomb boy, into the vice-sick, dispirited debauchee, without in anywise departing from the original mould of faces and persons. No power of imitation could do this. It is a feat of high imagination. Counsellor *Silvertongue* and the Alderman preserve their original selves without much alteration. Hogarth could hardly speak truth when he says that none of the characters were personal. The *Quack* is an obvious portrait, and might represent *St. André*. The *virago*, who has given a false bill of health, is said to resemble the daughter of *Cocks*, the auctioneer; but I would not willingly believe that Hogarth would portray any female as a procuress who was not actually of the profession. More likely it was *Betsy Careless*, or some other notorious secretary of vice. But however Hogarth might avail himself of actual living features, his pictures are seldom personal in the critical sense. It is upon the universal, not the particular, likeness that the effect depends; when a real face answers his purpose,

he uses it without scruple. As a moral lesson, the *Marriage à-la-Mode* is somewhat defective. Such a man and such a woman could have been happy in no marriage. To have justly exposed the evil of matches of interest and ambition, the parties should have been originally well-disposed, at least capable of virtue, and their errors should have resulted from the ill-assorted union. As far as they show the misery and ugliness of vice, the pictures are certainly moral; but they fail to elucidate the precise moral doctrine which they proposed. Hogarth could have made little of a happy marriage; and it is quite as well that he dropped the design. He was a bad hand at sentiment; and besides there is not much to paint in domestic comfort. I do not conclude with Wilkes, that his heart was bad, because he did not choose to exhibit a series of pap-boats, cradles, rocking-horses, children saying their prayers, or learning their A B C, ladies in the straw, white-robed in all the interesting importance of puerperal languor; gentlemen in their night-caps, receiving their physic from a fond, consolatory-looking spouse; or happy couples hob-nobbing over their frugal meal. I rather approve of the practice of dramatists and novelists who defer the happy marriage to the last scene of the fifth act, or last chapter of the third volume. Wilkie or Leslie might paint a happy wedding, or a happy family, but not a series of happy nuptial scenes. Hogarth, I dare say, understood married happiness, enjoyed it himself, and felicitated it in his friends; but by painting he would only have

made it ridiculous or mawkish. Happiness is not very picturesque, or poetesque either, far less dramatic, for it is serious without being tragic. But, by your leave, Hogarth does give a happy marriage in the *Idle and Industrious 'Prentices*. The scene where Mr. Goodchild and Miss West are praying out of the same prayer-book, is one of his best-natured sketches; nothing harmonises better with love than devotion, and many happy matches originate in church. Allan hardly does justice to this series, some parts of which are equal to any Hogarth has done; but it is not industry and idleness, but prudence and depravity. A dead set at a moral generally misses in some point.

Page 134.—“A painting of a serious character escaped from his hand during the pressure of more engrossing engagements; the Presentation of young Moses to the daughter of Pharaoh.”

I cannot say much for the seriousness of Moses, or the Egyptian princess. The lady is very pretty—rather alluring, but neither Egyptian, royal, nor scriptural. Her attitude is very easy;—one might suspect the same of her virtue, for Moses is very, very like her; and, as Mrs. Wilkins says, those that hide know where to find. The destined law-giver looks like Don Juan—a little curly-pated, good-for-nothing, and mischief-making rascal from his birth. I do not think that Hogarth, either in this picture, or the less equivocal Paul before Felix, meant to ridicule the Bible. It was the painters of saints and prophets, not the saints and prophets themselves, whom he derided; as some

have travestied *Paradise Lost*, without being aware that they were infringing upon *Genesis*. The *St. Paul*, however, is very flat and low; and his serious picture on the same subject, amply revenges *Rembrandt*. It is deplorable.

Page 135.—“The March of the Guards to Finchley is a performance of a different character.”

It must be confessed, that though the March to Finchley could give no encouragement to the rebels who were rotting on the Moor of Drumrossie, it was not calculated to inspire foreigners with a high opinion of English discipline; and the dedication to the King of Prussia, much more renowned as a tactician and disciplinarian than as a patron of art, seems to finish the censure. In fact, I suspect, that notwithstanding the military hobby-horse of George the Second, our armies in general, and the guards in especial, exhibited in his reign a very different army from what modern inspectors would approve. The foot-guards were then a sort of janissaries, or prætorians. Many citizens entered the ranks as a protection against arrest, and still continued their ordinary occupations. The service was by no means honourable. One of Philip Quarles' numerous wives is quite indignant when she discovers that he belongs to the foot-guards. At their first institution these household troops, the germ of the standing army, were very unpopular.

Page 139.—“The two pictures called France and England,” &c.

No one, however, can dispute the loyalty and John Bullism of Hogarth. His France and England are standing proofs of it. His Frenchmen resemble nothing human; they are absolute mandrakes, personifications of famine. The only figure of merit in France is the Friar, feeling the axe. The grin on his countenance is indeed *darned* good. It is the true sensualism of cruelty. England is not much, but there is a jolly good-humour about it very exhilarating. The little fifer has more ease than Hogarth often exhibits. The prints were probably popular at the time. A French invasion was actually threatened in 1756; and some years afterwards Thurot made a descent in Ireland.

Page 141.—“Of the Cockpit I shall speak first,” &c.

The grave divine was not afraid to confess that he had been witness to a cock-match—as fit a scene for clergymen as an election. Lord Albemarle is not the only nobleman present. Another, decorated with star and ribbon, succumbs under the weight of a gigantic carpenter, and in turn crushes an unfortunate individual before against the barriers. Perhaps the best figure is the deaf man. Bellay, who wrote a hymn in commendation of deafness, might have envied him.

Page 141.—"The Cockpit. I know not what influence the satire of the painter had on this horrid pastime."

What influence could a print be expected to have upon men accustomed to behold the reality, which it only copies? Hogarth must himself have frequented the cock-pit, or how could he have drawn it so vividly; and I dare say the barbarism of the spectacle did not prevent him from heartily enjoying so rich a collection of humour. The countenance of Lord A. Bertie is marked with benevolence. I have known kind-hearted cock-fighters.

Page 142.—"An election of a member of parliament opens a wide field. 'The Entertainment.'" "

Charles Lamb thought this print Hogarth's *chef d'œuvre*; and though I think that he has several of profounder interest, it may be questioned whether he has any that displays so vigorous an invention—such variety of countenances, each with a character of its own, and yet all possessed with the spirit of the time—such marvellous skill in the grouping, such distinctness amid all the confusion, such wonderful variation of attitude, and such strong historic humour, where can we elsewhere find?

Page 144.—"The second scene, 'The Canvass,' is laid in the street of the Borough."

With all the riot and uproar, we may remark that there is none of that personal bitterness which lets

all hell loose at a modern election. All parties seem aware that it is a game that is playing—a game from which honesty is conventionally banished—a saturnalia—a sort of Alsatia where morals have no more business than Cato at the Floral games: a state of things bad enough if judged by rigid principles; but surely less diabolical than the Jacobin malignity and patrician scorn which a contest now conjures up, turning every gentlewoman into a she-devil, far more disgusting than the old wife of Bath, whose caresses the candidate is doomed to endure with such enforced complacency; as the bewigged parson, (Dr. Cosserat,) who eats the God whom he adores, is, at any rate, a more genial monster than the sanctified electioneerer in orders, who dares to appeal to moral and religious feelings, and even stakes the authority of the Church itself in the vile cause of sedition or oppression. I would that, of the new-created boroughs, none were worse than Guzzledown. Knavery is better than spite. I think I should have backed the arguments of the spouse of the conscientious tailor who hesitates to receive the gratification. Jacky's bare feet are eloquent pleaders. Sir John Parnell is the facetious gentleman who is making a face with his hand and handkerchief. I like him for volunteering on the occasion. This is the way to defy satire. The only thing that I dislike about the print is the figure of the choking mayor. Apoplexy is no joke. A broken head is all very well. The mottos—Give us back our eleven days—Marry and Multiply—No Jews—serve to realise the passages of the time, and explain

the topics on which his majesty, the people, then chose to be indignant. None of the other prints are equal to the first, yet each of them has its merit. The rustic between the two bribing landlords is a study for the Judgment of Hercules. The hosts, too, are well distinguished. The one secure, bold, shameless, bids openly, and thinks he has made a legal tender which cannot reasonably be refused. The other sly, smooth, fawning, secret, a very pimp of Plutus, slides a larger sum into the hard, yet sensitive palm of the chaw-bacon, as sweetly as ever *billet-doux* slipped into the white melting hand of half-willing virgin. Pope's tickler could not have done it better; the man is sorely puzzled. His enjoyment is quite amorous. The touch of the shiners thrills in every vein. The disputants at the door of the Portobello are evidently discussing the merits of Admiral Vernon, one of the few heroes that have had the honour of being mob-idols. The fellow astride the sign of the "Crown," which he is sawing asunder amid the huzzas of the country party, too drunk to consider that its fall hazards his own neck, is one of Hogarth's happiest attempts at pictorial allegory; but the coachman and footman playing cards on the box of Britannia's down-breaking carriage, are out of place, and improbable. Allegory should be sparingly blended with fact. The third is not to me a pleasing print. The maimed, the sick, the idiotic, and the dying, are not pleasant objects of laughter. Hogarth has suffered his indignation to grow too serious. Yet the candidates and the lawyers—the security on one

side, the anxiety on the other, the bluster on both, the heat, the hustle and the jam of the hustings, are wonderfully true. The chairing is pure farce. The best of it is the blind fiddler dancing to his own music—a happy maniac in the solitude of his own dark world. It may be observed that Mr. Potter, the candidate of the first scene, never makes his appearance again. Bubb Dodington's Diary is an excellent comment on these prints; there is a degree of open rascality which disarms all mere reprehension—one cannot blame Bubb for being a knave—one rather approves of his fulfilling the purpose of his creation so diligently. He knew nothing, he never knew anything, of honesty. Such was purity of election in the old days of cramming, bludgeon, and bribery. It is not much better in these times of fire and dagger agitation, though the abridging the period of contests, and dividing the places of polling, is a great improvement.

Page 156.—“After many essays, Hogarth produced his Sigismunda, but no more like Sigismunda than I to Hercules.”

I never saw Hogarth's Sigismunda, of which I believe he made no engraving, therefore cannot speak to the colouring; but from a reduced copy, I conclude that the picture, though not graceful or elegant, has high dramatic merit. It embodies Dryden's Sigismunda. Hogarth could hardly make her more like a strumpet than Dryden has done. It is the picture of a middle-aged woman, in the late summer of her beauty; of strong passions, restrained, but not subdued,

and a proud will. An expression of Christian patience would hardly have suited a person meditating suicide. I think Hogarth was ill-used about the picture. Sir R. Grosvenor was a shabby dog. But it was not wise in Hogarth to attempt to vie with a picture of established fame. People don't like to be put out of conceit with their old favourites. We do not want another King Lear or another Othello. In vindication of Horace Walpole, whose Whiggism does not exclude him from the praise of Albemarle Street, a Quarterly Reviewer remarks that, originally, Sigismunda was represented tearing off her ornaments, and with bloody fingers. The heart is a disgusting object, and should have been concealed. A lover's heart in a picture must always look like a calf's heart. It is seldom safe for author, actor, or painter, to enter upon a new line at a late period of life. Should Liston make ever so good a Hamlet, he would still be looked on as Paul Pry. Had Kemble succeeded ever so well in Falstaff, the tones of Cato and Zanga would have obstructed the public ear, and dashed their mirth with perplexity. Whatever the merits of Hogarth's Sigismunda, the Harlot and the Rake were sure to stand in her light. Yet more unwise was it to vex his old age with factious politics, and to tax his declining powers with the worthless drudgery of allegorical caricature. I never could understand the allusions in 'The Times,' or see either wit, humour, sense, or fun in it.* The worst political caricature

* This drew forth my print of "The Times," a subject which tended to the restoration of peace and unanimity."—*Hogarth*.

ever published by Hone, Cruikshank, Tegg, or Rolandson, has more meaning.

How Hogarth could expect to quench a popular conflagration with such a wet dish-clout, is unaccountable. It would hardly have told had it been on the popular side. Allan is, I think, too severe on Churchill; Hogarth certainly struck the first blow, and he was not a man who could reasonably expect to be spared. It is not true that Churchill reproached him with his age; he censured the pursuits that make age irreverend and infirmity unpitiable. When Shakspeare says, "How ill grey hairs become a fool—a jester," does he deride or vindicate the sanctity of grey hairs? Does the man who peers at the failings of his fellow-creatures through spectacles, and depicts them with a trembling hand, give a very amiable idea of old age? An old man should no more be a satirist than a lover. On the whole, I think it had been well for poor Churchill if his early death-bed had been haunted with no heavier offence than his attack upon Hogarth.

Page 165.—"Wilkes says truly, in allusion to his own portrait, that he did not make himself," &c.

Satirists are apt to entertain very exaggerated notions of their own power and influence. The fact is, they are all but impotent, unless they swim with the stream. Hogarth talks as if his portrait of Wilkes was alone sufficient to strip that worthy of all the imputed honours of political martyrdom; as if,

forsooth, a patriot might not squint, or a champion of the people look like the deity of Lampsacus. Wilkes's ugliness had not spoiled his fortune with the women; how, then, could his effigy impair his credit with the mob?

Page 166.—"Milton was not unwilling to claim the merit of having shortened the life of Salmasius."

I should like to see, indeed I must seek out, the passage in which Milton exults in the death of Salmasius. I hope neither he nor Churchill meant the actual *bonâ fide* death of body or soul, but only the destruction of force and influence.

Page 166.—"The last work of Hogarth was worthy of his genius, and is known to the world by the title of Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism."

I do not like this print at all. It has the profaneness without the humour of the Tale of a Tub. It is an unsuccessful attempt at pantagruelism, with all the outrageousness and none of the richness of Rabelais. It is a jumble of various superstitions, some sharply opposed to each other, never co-existent in the same sect, hardly at the same time. It is a vain attempt to crowd together all possible aberrations of afflicted humanity in regard to the unseen world, to mingle in a witch's caldron all the poisonous herbs and abortive births of the waste of ignorance, and discharge the hell-broth on the head of Methodism. But there is little method in the design, and not much merit in the execution. The boy vomiting

pins, and the rabbit-breeder, are merely disgusting. In the original sketch, which is in all respects superior to the alteration, though still very offensive, the place of the former is occupied by a most devout dog; a figure which was really a light diffusing cheerfulness over the gloom. The faces of the Jew and the clerk are also altered for the worse. The original design is well copied in the third volume of Ireland's Hogarth. The two figures in the clerk's pew evidently glance at a common reproach against the followers of Wesley, but Wesley never inculcated the worship of images; the action, therefore, of the extatic pair wants decorum in every sense of the word, and is as absurd as it is gross. I am not one who hold that all folly and all iniquity should be sacred from ridicule, the moment that it assumes the name and garb of religion, any more than that sedition, slander, indecency, or breach of the peace, should plead liberty of conscience against the law. All manner of imposition, all dogmatism, whether supported by bullying, or by sophistry, all human inventions that forge the Divine signature, all that paraphernalia which would establish a spiritual dominion by fascination of the senses, all the arts of priestcraft, and all the despotism of hierarchy, are just and laudable objects of satire, so long as the satirist is careful not to weed up the wheat along with the tares. The religion of the sense, the religion of positive law, the religion of false expediency, may lawfully be laughed to scorn; but the religion of the heart, the fears and groanings of the soul convinced

of sin, the unutterable yearnings of the creature made subject to vanity for freedom, even the vile error that mistakes physical sensation, or the deceits of the evil one, for the immediate presence of the Supreme, a delirium for the beatific vision, are too holy or too dreadful for ridicule. Man's heart, even in its delusions, its perverseness, its sinfulness, is a holy—an awful thing. Its issues are for eternity. As a somewhat parallel case, I would say that the fashion of gallantry is the fittest theme for comedy; but true love is too sacred, and lust too fearful to be sported with.

Page 167.—“They whose enthusiastic delusions Bishop Lavington terms ‘religion run mad.’”

Bishop Lavington is inaccurate. True religion never was mad; but madness sometimes assumes the form of religion. It is possible, indeed, that superstition, fanaticism, or ascetic devotion may produce physical madness.

Page 174.—“Nichols, a person who misconceived Hogarth's genius, since he said it was exclusively comic, and who was therefore likely to misunderstand his character, has described him as a man whose whole powers of pleasing were confined to his pencil, whose manners were gross and uncultivated.”

The truth probably was, Hogarth was a gentleman in gentlemen's company, but found himself more at ease in society that furnished more available studies for his pencil. That he was vulgar can hardly be true. His intellect forbad it. His very representa-

tions of vulgarity are too ideal to be vulgar. If he were gross it was the vice of his age.

The offences of Hogarth against decency are few,—for the most part latent, and never mischievous, because never alluring. His aversion to religious pictures, however, often leads him to the brink of profaneness; but, in extenuation, it must be remembered that he lived in a very gross and a very irreligious age. Methodism taught the necessity of zeal to the clergy—the French Revolution convinced the aristocracy that Christianity was essential to the privileged order.

Page 176.—“‘When I sat to Hogarth,’ said Mr. Cole, ‘the custom of giving vails to servants was not discontinued.’”

Hogarth's conduct in regard to his servants seems to have been altogether excellent. I can hardly think Sir Joshua could have been serious in his offer to his man, Ralph.* Nobility itself neither then nor yet prohibits servants from exacting gratuities, when mansions or galleries are open to the public. Hogarth, partly from the circumstances of his birth and education, partly from the character of his genius and the line of art which he pursued, was likely to understand the menial classes much better than Reynolds, to take a deeper interest in their welfare, their amusements and their enjoyments, and at the same time to bear a more watchful eye on their cupidity and slyness.

* “Sir Joshua Reynolds gave his servant 6*l.* annually of wages, and offered him 100*l.* a year for the door.”

Reynolds was certainly not deficient in generosity. Had there been any appearance of meanness about him, the haughty Johnson would never have asked remission of a debt which he had the means of paying. But he seems, like many old bachelors, and I may add like most persons of a refined and fastidious taste, to have wanted that spirit of kindly good-nature which wishes to be well with all, and is eager to bestow even a momentary pleasure on all that are capable of being pleased.

Page 179.—“Accompanying the prints of Hogarth’s favorite works, appeared explanations in verse, sometimes with the names of the authors, but oftener without, and all alike distinguished by weakness and want of that graphic accuracy which marked the engravings.”

Surely the verses of Hoadly appended to the Rake’s Progress are not devoid of poetic merit. They are sweetly versified and well expressed. Bankes wrote lines descriptive of Southwark Fair, and of the Modern Midnight Conversation—no way excellent, but the former curious and explanatory. But few of Hogarth’s works furnish good subjects for poetry. No language is picturesque enough to furnish terms equivalent to his strokes, and, for the most part, his *dramatis personæ* are only fit for dumb show. To make them speak otherwise than such folks do speak would break the charm; to write or utter the words they must needs be saying were intolerable to ear and eye. Poetical descriptions of pictures are seldom very good. I am glad that poets

have left off giving directions to painters. A poet may describe, or rather express, the feelings produced by a picture; but poetry must be always something more or something less than painting. Poetic description should never be too definite. It should feed and stimulate, not constrain, the shaping power.

Page 182.—“The morality of Hogarth has been questioned.”

Perhaps no satirist is less obnoxious to the charge of teaching the vices he exposes than Hogarth. Whatever pity the Harlot or the Rake may excite by their misfortunes, begets no secret liking for their crimes. But there are persons who think all satire immoral, and that the very existence of vice should be concealed.

Page 182.—“He has been accused of want of knowledge in the human form, and of grace and serenity of expression.”

Hogarth was unquestionably deficient in drawing, and judged merely by the eye. His attitudes are seldom pleasing, and not always natural. But his figures are almost as expressive as his faces. With him a drunken man is drunk all over. The laziness of the Idle Apprentice relaxes every joint and muscle; and when brought before his former fellow 'prentice, he crouches with his whole soul and body. Serenity would not have suited his subjects.

Page 183.—“In his memorandums respecting the establishment of an Academy of Art in England, he writes well and wisely.”

I am partly of Hogarth's opinion. Academies may

foster, but cannot create genius. That ours has improved the mechanic art of painting cannot be disputed. It has established a sort of aristocracy in art, and probably improved the education of artists. For poetry an academy can do absolutely nothing, and just as little for the poetry of painting. Perhaps, however, Hogarth under-rated the advantages of instruction and association, as much as Reynolds over-rated them. His own was a faculty that can be neither learned, taught, nor acquired. More *general* education might have given him more grace, more temperance, more suavity, but perhaps might have seduced him at times from the path in which he was first and sole, to others, in which he could not have been more than fifth or sixth. More professional education might have taught him to draw better, if he could have submitted to be taught; but I believe him to have been unteachable. Thus, having succeeded himself without instruction, by the force of ideas potentiated by observation, he thought rules, which are all that can be taught, were of no use to anybody,—and here he was mistaken,—but there is no occasion to ascribe his mistake to envy. Perhaps conceit might have something to do with it.

Page 186.—“‘As a *painter*,’ says Walpole, ‘Hogarth has slender merit.’”

If by a painter you mean an artist who charms the eye by combinations of form and colour, and who satisfies the intellectual desire for symmetry, pro-

portion, and the *οὐδεν ἄγαν*, he certainly does not rank with Raphael. As for the co-extension of the terms, painter and poet, it does not much avail.* Those who deny Hogarth to be a painter, would probably deny Crabbe to be a poet.

ON THE GENIUS OF HOGARTH.

“Perhaps if Hogarth had written his pictures, they would have been much in the style of Hudibras.”—*Athenæum*.

This I think more than doubtful. In the first place, Hogarth's pictures could not be written. They cannot even be described. Hogarth's attempts at pictorial wit are, for the most part, poor enough. He has every shade and variety of humour that can be indicated to the eye. Humour in the fulness of its ancient acceptation. Farcical, as in the *Strolling Actresses* and *Enraged Musician*; pure comic, as in the *Modern Midnight Conversation*; bitterly satiric, as in the last scene of the *Harlot's Progress*; keenly pathetic in a hundred instances; sometimes wide and general, as in *Southwark Fair*, the *Industrious Apprentice's Mayoralty*, the *March to Finchley*, &c.; sometimes intensely individualised, as in the *Projector in the Fleet*, the *Roguish Scrivener in the Rake's Progress*, the *Quack in Marriage à-la-Mode*, the congregation issuing from the *French Chapel in Noon*; but everywhere it is humour. A twist, a perversion, a *haut goût* of the total man, a moral, not an intellectual

* “I claim a signification as wide for the word Painter, as for the word Poet.”—A. C.

distortion. He takes just as much of the plebeian half-animal man as looks and gestures can express, and for which language affords no sufficient exponent. His pictures might, were there Mathewses and Mundens enough, be acted in dumb-show, but they could not be dramatised in words. Secondly, there is no resemblance of mind between Butler and Hogarth. Had Butler been a painter like Hogarth, or rather like Callot, he might have produced a highly idealised resemblance of the allegorical caricatures of Gilray. Had Hogarth written, instead of painted, his scenes and stories, I suspect he would have approached to the harsher passages of Fielding. Burns had more of Hogarth in him than had Butler.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Page 206.—“He who shared in imagination the imperial robe of Michel Angelo, would have scorned the meaner mantle of Godfrey Kneller.”

Sir Joshua had too much sense to share in imagination the robe of Michel; he never attempted anything in Michel Angelo's style, and knew well enough that his genius was not of Buonarotti's quality. He showed a strong mind and a generous heart by awarding the first place in art to a man whose power both in kind and degree differed so widely from his own.

Page 209.—“But his principal fund of imitation was Jacob Catts’s ‘Book of Emblems,’ &c. . . . The prints in Plutarch are rude and uncouth; those in the ‘Book of Emblems’ are more to the purpose,” &c.

Both these books were once familiar to me; but I don’t know whether Jacob Catts would impress any one with an admiration of foreign art, though they say much for the fertility of Dutch fancy. They were not to Reynolds what the song-book was to Burns.

Page 212.—“Reynolds proceeded with his studies under Hudson; but it seldom happens that a man of no genius and moderate skill can give sound counsel to one who longs for distinction, and has the talent to obtain it.”

This, at least, admits of doubt. Men of no genius and moderate skill may be very useful teachers; for moderate skill is all that can be taught. Men of genius always strive to convey ideas; men of mere talent are content with giving rules; and rules are a necessary discipline. Excellence above the pupil’s imitation will be apt to inspire despair, or to call away the attention from those mechanical details which lead to executive skill. It is in vain to aim at great models before the pupil has learned to draw. A vagueness and want of determinate aim is very apt to beset the student who attempts to work in the light of great principles before he has mastered the rudiments of practice. Hudson, I believe, was a better master for Reynolds than Michel Angelo or Titian could have been. Great men of any kind are

seldom fully aware of the process by which they produce excellence, however deeply they may have meditated on its constituent laws. There is, however, this difference between schoolmasters of moderate learning and artists of moderate skill—the schoolmaster's pride and glory is in his scholars, and the more the pupil excels the master, the better for the master's reputation. Artists, on the other hand, behold in their pupils their future rivals, and, if they be not very honest men, no common case with small geniuses of any class, they have at least a temptation to retard the progress which must soon become competition. Hudson even could not bear to be outdone.

“Would it not offend a person contemplating a capital picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, to have his attention called off to observe a piece of drapery naturally represented?”—Sir J. R.

Page 229.—“What is it that drapery ought to resemble, and wherewithal shall a man be clothed that his garments may not look too natural? The living St. Paul was under no such apprehension.”—A. C.

Allan forgets that drapery may be imitated even in painting much more nearly than life and motion, and that a coloured statue may be, and often has been, dressed in real clothes. If the living St. Paul had chosen to wear a very splendid or fantastic garment, there might have been some danger of his raiment distracting the attention of his audience. Still I think Reynolds wrong in advising a vague and generalising mode of painting the adjuncts to a picture.

The imitation may be closer, or more remote, but it should be equal in every part. Some painters produce a great effect by finishing particular parts in the strongest nature, and leaving the rest in mere dead colour. This was Kean's style; but, though imposing, it is not true. It is not genuine art, but artifice. Not that all should be equally striking, but all should be equally exact, as in poetry. Not every line should be alike pregnant, sonorous, or luscious; but none should be awkward, unmetrical, or ungrammatical. In all things, obediently follow the beautiful perspective and strict subordination of nature; but never dream of idealising by mere omission. Not so did the Greeks—not so Shakspeare, Milton, or Dante, perhaps the most minute of all poets. Of the Apollo it is sufficient to say that it is the statue of a god. A close resemblance to actual life would have been as much out of place as the individualities of Shakspeare and Homer would have been in Milton's Adam and Eve.

Page 238.—“It was Reynolds's good fortune also to make a remark which Johnson perceived could only have arisen in the mind of a man who thought for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend to whom they owed great obligations. ‘You have, however, the comfort,’ said Reynolds, ‘of being relieved from the burthen of gratitude.’ They were shocked at this selfish suggestion; but Johnson maintained that it was true to human nature, and, on going away, accompanied Reynolds home. Thus commenced a friendship which was continued to old age without much interruption.”

All the satires of Hogarth do not bear so hard on

poor human nature as this speech of the courtly Reynolds. For "gratitude" we should read obligation. True "gratitude," though still owing, still to pay, is the most delightful sensation of a good heart. But obligations for benefits which we cannot repay in kind, from persons whom we cannot love, and whom we suspect of not loving us, is unquestionably a wound in our pride.

Page 238.—"The rough and saturnine Johnson was very unlike the soft, graceful, and flexible Reynolds," &c.

This is one of the best-written passages in the book. Johnson came into polite life too late to acquire the conventional graces, even if his natural configuration of mind or of body had rendered the acquisition possible at any time. He had, perhaps, adopted an overbearing manner originally in self-defence, for he was long doomed to companies from whom respect is only to be extorted by fear; and when he had emerged into the great man of his age, he preferred the reputation of brutality to that of *gaucherie*, and gave to his irremediable deficiencies the air of choice and wilfulness. He often—for I suspect there was something of calculation in it—succeeded. Men perhaps of stronger minds, but weaker nerves, shrunk from a contest which might have provoked rudeness beyond a gentleman's endurance; and his slightest attentions, in the strong light of his reputation, and with the dark ground of his general *brusquerie*, were as efficacious as the most refined flattery. Then his infirmities and oddities rendered

his assumption of superiority much less offensive to the self-love of his associates, and fine gentlemen were willing to hear him dictate as an oracle, whom they could pity or ridicule as a monster and a bear.

Page 242.—“ His acquaintance with Johnson induced him about this time to write for the ‘*Idler*’ some papers on exact imitations of nature and the true conception of beauty.”

Notwithstanding the high praise bestowed on Reynolds in the *Biog. Lit.*, I very much doubt if Reynolds quite understood himself when he talked about beauty. If the productions of nature are all beautiful, beauty is an unmeaning word. If he mean all nature’s works compose a beautiful whole, it is a truth, but not to the purpose. In speaking of nature, he manifestly confounds the beautiful and the agreeable ; and when talking of ideal beauty, does not seem aware that beauty is itself a pure idea ; an operation of mind, and no measureable or ponderable quality of matter. He hunts for a material, concrete beauty, different from the beauty of nature, and thinks to lay hold of it by the Aristotelian doctrine of mean proportionals, as if the beautiful were beautiful not for what it is, but for what it is not. He had got hold of certain truths, which he had neither imagination to realise, nor learning to expound and illustrate. He saw partly that high art is not a mere fac-simile, but his precepts afford no light as to how it is to rise above fac-simile ;—he only

substitutes a vague and general for a particular imitation, not conceiving that beauty must be created by an effort, and generative act, like in kind to, but more intense in degree than, that by which beauty, either in nature or in art, is perceived. Hogarth, with even less learning, and probably a less refined taste than Reynolds, exhibits in his analysis much more of the elemental faculty of the philosopher, though he had not escaped from the false notion, that the mind, in the contemplation of beauty, is the mere passive recipient of the impression on the retina; whence it would follow, that beauty is merely the lust of the eye, the sensual pleasure of sight, akin to the gratifications of the lower senses. But his line, if not the sole constituent, is the most adequate symbol of beauty,—the greatest variety in the most perfect unity—a whole implied in an infinite evolution of parts. Of the sublime, however, Hogarth had little feeling, and no understanding; hence he failed, and from the constitution of his genius must have failed, however his genius had been cultivated in scriptural subjects. He could contemplate a whole as a whole in all its essential parts, but not abstractedly from the parts. Reynolds had not power to produce the sublime, but I believe him capable of feeling and appreciating it; and he habitually delighted in the calm, the dignified, the select. He was a judicious, but not a profound man. As far as I can judge from a very imperfect acquaintance with his works, their characteristic is gentility, with rather too much fashion.

Page 246.—“ One of the biographers of Reynolds imputes the reflections contained in the conclusion of this letter to that kind of envy which perhaps even Johnson felt, when comparing his own annual gains with those of his more fortunate friends.”

The world, and many men who pretend to despise the world, are remarkably liberal in charging great artists, poets, and philosophers with envy. Johnson envied Reynolds,—Hogarth envied Reynolds; and Reynolds envied Hogarth, Wilson, and Barry. I can see no proof of any of these envies. Johnson was a religionist, who had formed his creed and standard, if I mistake not, more from the practical divinity current in his youth, such as the *Whole Duty of Man*, *Gentleman's Religion*, *Decay of Piety*, &c., than from the weightier theologians of the old school. Though by no means of an austere life, he was an ascetic upon theory, and thought religion ought to be the business, as well as the rule and spirit, of human existence. He rarely speaks even of poetry with much respect, and was strongly inclined to consider all verse-making, except that which turned moral common-places into epigrams, as loss of time; for he does not seem to have admired devotional poetry so much as might have been expected. As for painting, he could not be expected to enjoy what he could but imperfectly see, and perhaps could not look at without pain. But he rejoiced in the fortune of Reynolds, and his little scrap of morality to Baretta is mere words of course.*

* “ This exhibition has filled the heads of artists and lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of that time which never can return.”—*Johnson to Baretta*.

It was lucky for the Doctor that his companion was not Hogarth instead of Reynolds, when he was swallowing the honey and clouted cream. Hogarth and Reynolds could not understand, and very likely might not much like, one another: but I do not believe there was much envy on either side. Hogarth had no just reason to complain of his success with the public, though he had not experienced very liberal patronage from the great. He had discontinued portrait-painting, in a great measure, before Reynolds appeared. The talents of Reynolds he was more likely to underrate than to envy; and, as for his reputation, he must have known that his own fame was of a stronger build. Both Johnson and Hogarth doubtless felt, and strongly expressed, a dissatisfaction with the way in which fashion and fortune distributed their favours and their honours. Neither of them were optimists; but general dissatisfaction with the state of things is a very different feeling from personal envy or ill-will. No man was less satisfied with the world than my late father,—no man more free from individual envy. If he had an angry emotion, it was against the public, not against the public's minions. Still more unlikely is it, that Reynolds's scanty praise of Hogarth and Wilson was the result of envy. To Wilson he, perhaps, might have been kinder. A distaste for a man's rough manners is a very insufficient excuse for blindness or silence as to his merits as a genius. But it is to be considered that Sir Joshua was an aristocrat in art, and probably thought that rakes and harlots, dram-

drinkers, and idle apprentices, were unworthy subjects of the faculty divine, which had been graced by Raphael and Michel Angelo. I think he was wrong; but an error of judgment, even a narrowness of taste, should not be charged as an obliquity of morals. Landscape was not a branch of art which he seems to have highly appreciated; perhaps because he did not know how to apply to it his own theories of the grand style. At all events, it was not the direct topic of any of his lectures. The didactic nature of those lectures ought to be considered. He was not discussing all the ways in which genius might be embodied by the pencil; if he had, his slight notice of Hogarth would have been a serious omission; but he was instructing youths in what he considered the method of attaining or approaching to the highest order of excellence. He must have known that none but a Hogarth could become anything by imitating Hogarth but a vulgar caricaturist, or, at best, a pictorial buffoon; whereas a man could hardly imitate Raphael, Michel Angelo, or Leonardo, however unsuccessfully, without exalting his conceptions and his imagination. I suspect, however, that Reynolds was no great believer in genius, and thought talent and application could effect more in art than they are really capable of. Having heard, and thought, and dreamed much of the great schools of art, he erroneously concluded that even average capacities can be schooled into great artists. Sir Joshua was moreover a prudent man, and a great admirer of prudence, and might think that a violent admiration of Hogarth

or Wilson might seduce young men into the satirical propensities of the former, and the porter-drinking habits of the latter, while it would not communicate the virtues or the genius of either. Still, it is not to be denied that Reynolds had not a generous delight in praising contemporaries of his own craft. The courtship of public favour in any line is not calculated to make any man larger-hearted than it finds him. Reynolds had many and great virtues, but I never knew but one man in whom a highly refined moral taste, undeviating rectitude, and prudence, co-existed with openness, generosity, and a catholic love of excellence, and a just allowance for the frailties of his weak brethren.*

Page 283.—“When Dr. Tucker, the famous Dean of Gloucester, asserted before the Society for encouraging Commerce and Manufactures, that a pin-maker was a more useful and valuable member of Society than Raphael, Sir Joshua was nettled, and replied with some asperity.”

Dean Tucker was probably not aware how perilous his utilitarian principle might become to his own order. Perhaps he would not have said so much at Sir Joshua's table. There was a fashion of complimenting the trading and operative part of the community, at the expense of the intellectual arts, as foolish, though not so heart-hardening as the contempt which some fine folks express for all manual employment. Were it true that pin-making was more

* Robert Southey is doubtless intended.—D C.

important to society than painting, it would by no means follow that the individual pin-maker was superior to the great artist. The just comparison is not between artisans and artists, but between the trades of use and those which minister to luxury and vanity. A carpenter is certainly a more valuable person than a trinket-maker or man-milliner. But there is room enough for all; and so long as no necessary or innocent employment is debased or oppressed, none ought to repine at the honour done to another. All occupations cannot be equally honourable, but all should be equally respectable. Sir Joshua's retort is not very profound. Arts and sciences are no more an end than mechanics or agriculture; an enjoyment necessarily confined to a few cannot be the final cause of human existence. I would rather adopt the heresy of Dean Tucker than admit that any human being is created for an end in which himself has no part.

Page 286.—“A series of allegorical figures for the window of New College Chapel, at Oxford, employed his pencil during the year 1780, and for several succeeding years.”

Without in anywise partaking Bishop Terrick's prejudice against pictures in churches, which I think might be made both instructive and edifying, I cannot think Reynolds or his New College patrons judicious in exhibiting those allegorical personages, who are never personified in Scripture, on a chapel-window. There is a fatal want of common-sense in all allegorical painting. It can possess no merit but that

of colour and design. I perfectly forget these *chiaroscuro*s—a proof that they never made any impression upon my eye.

Though I give the Bishop credit for well-meaning in his refusal of the pictures offered to St. Paul's, I can hardly think that he stated the true grounds of his objection. He probably thought that the paintings would be regarded as fine paintings are even in popish countries, merely as works of art, and might dissipate, in admiration of human genius, those feelings which, within consecrated walls, should be devoted to the Invisible alone. A truly zealous Christian would have none to enter a church but for prayer, praise, instruction, or meditation. Pictures or other ornaments certainly attract *dilettanti* idlers, whose technical raptures sound strangely in the house of humiliation and godly fear. But perhaps the most serious scruple in the question arises from the character of English art itself. English angels rather resemble the pretty creatures on earth whom we catachrestically flatter with the name, than the high imagination of a heavenly messenger. English virgins are too tempting and luscious to be secure in virginity. Mary Magdalen, in an English picture, reminds one too much of the Magdalen Hospital; and the apostles and prophets look like comely actors dressed for the parts, unless, indeed, their beards and eyebrows are so exaggerated as to give them the air of melodramatic banditti. Then the landscape, the trees, the buildings, the animals, are so natural, and the drapery so spruce and natty, that the whole looks

like a thing of to-day, and the austere religionist is provoked to say, with Hercules, "*Nil sacri es.*"

The naughty grotesques in the old missals could hardly be more distracting. Now, the religious pictures of the old masters, so far from bringing down the events of Scripture history to the level of to-day, open a vista through the dark backward and abysm of time, and make visible the immutable past, with all its hoary honours. Nothing belongs to the world that is. Nothing challenges assent or incredulity, like an *on dit* of the morning. The manger in which the Saviour was born is not to be found at Holkham, the cattle are not of Smithfield, and yet there is no departure from nature to be detected. As in true poetry, you feel as though the thoughts could not have been otherwise expressed in rigid prose, so in the sublime of art, you conceive not that aught could be other than it is, had it sat for its likeness.

Page 295.—“Allan Ramsay, the king's painter, died in 1784, and was succeeded in his office by Reynolds.”

Reynolds could safely comply with the king's wishes, and confer on the office that dignity which the office could no longer confer on him; for he was neither a satirist, nor a moralist, nor a politician: the very character of his genius fitted him for the ornament of a court—as Johnson well observed that his name was suited to a title. But Hogarth would have done wisely to decline what a judicious minister would not have offered. He was hardly more fit for

serjeant-painter than Cibber for poet-laureate. Whatever differences of character or talent there might be between Hogarth and Colley, there were ludicrous associations with both, which the court could ill afford. Their appointment was likely to make their enemies, enemies of the government, and certain to expose them to the malignity of the disaffected. Satire may be highly serviceable to an administration; but then the satirist, like the sharp-shooter, should be kept out of sight. Moreover, the cynical satirist, the austere and stoic moralist, should never pay compliments. Praise is so alien from their general habits, that, however sincere, it is always suspected of being either purchased, or mendicant, or ironical. I speak, of course, of such satirists as have dignity to lose; not of parasites or all licensed fools; and I speak, too, of the effect produced on the public,—for the compliments of a blunt man often tell upon their direct object, because they are supposed to proceed from affection. Reynolds, a painter of beauties and children, might compliment as much as he chose: it was his way,—he was not a professor of veracity. How lovely, how purely innocent, is the poetic flattery of Spenser! Waller's is, at least, ingenious, genteel, and harmless; whereas the satiric Dryden and the moral Young are absolutely nauseous in their adulation. Reynolds's pictorial compliments were not always ingenious. Clytemnestra would have represented Catherine better than Hercules; but his flattery was never offensive except in the portrait of Beattie. Where religion is even hinted, there should

be no compliment to mortal men. Our liturgy would approximate yet nearer to perfection if some courtly phrases were removed. The lapidary adulation which lines the walls of our churches is a disgrace to Christendom.

Page 310.—“Rules were the ornaments, not the fetters, of genius.”

Rules can never be ornaments; and I do not believe Sir Joshua ever said so. He might have compared them to the zones of ancient, or to the stays of modern, beauties; but I would rather call them the bones of art.

Page 312.—“It was, I apprehend, too, the province of the President to point out those natural qualities by which genius for art might be distinguished from forwardness and presumption, and young men might see whether they were led by the false light of vanity, or by light from heaven.”

I much doubt whether any preceptor can do this either by words or practical experiment, even were he gifted with supernatural discernment to distinguish between the first essays of genius, and those of mere imitative cleverness,—for genius itself must be imitative in its first stage. There are, indeed, some natural defects that can never be surmounted; such, in the case of painting, are the want of a correct eye and obedient hand. Where the perception of form is indistinct, the sense of proportion wanting, or where the hand cannot in anywise fulfil the intention of the mind, where the pupil cannot foresee and determine what sort of shape his pencil is about to produce, the

case is palpably hopeless; the mere wish to be a painter will no more bestow the faculty, than the wish to see will give eyes to the blind; and you might as well expect that the study of optics will teach the blind to see, as that the study, aye, or the profound theoretic knowledge of the principles of art, will make an artist of one who, in relation to his proper purpose, is as blind as if he could not see the sun; as helpless as if he were born without fingers, toes, or mouth. But with such cases a professor has seldom to deal, though many occur to an ordinary drawing-master, and much time and money, and much useless pain, is wasted in consequence. But a correct eye and obedient hand will not make an artist; yet where they exist, I know not how an instructor is to decide whether the possessor will become an artist or not. He may have his private thoughts, but they may possibly be wrong. I cannot see that it was Sir Joshua's duty to command, where he had little chance of being obeyed; where his advice would have been attributed to envy, would never have made a dauber the fewer, and certainly might have discouraged a true genius; for nothing discourages presumptuous conceit. An honest man would hardly persuade any youth to become an artist; but where the passion is, dissuasion is useless; and it is better that one take any reputable course, and persevere in it, than show the heels to one's indentures.

I have just learned that the very advice which Allan would have Sir Joshua give to the unpromising

pupil, was actually given by Tintoretto to Ludovico Carracci. So much for the duty of a president.

With many acute observations, I must needs say, that this is the worst written, and worst natured, of all Allan's Lives. What could have inspired him with so ungenial a feeling towards Sir Joshua I cannot tell. It is probable that Sir Joshua was somewhat over-rated by Burke, whose own "Sublime and Beautiful" does not promise a philosophic discrimination in æsthetics. Sir Joshua was an excellent artist—a pleasing writer; but that is all. His pictures delight the eyes, and benefit the heart, but they add nothing to our powers of thought; they do not, like those of Hogarth, create or beget a new faculty; evoke ideas, in the light whereof scenes hitherto repulsive or merely ridiculous, aspects and characters that excite disgust or inane laughter, become replete with profit and delight. But England, the world, had but one Hogarth, and Hogarth did nothing to advance his art. He has taught many to think, to see, to observe—but none to paint. Reynolds's zeal for his art blended with his patriotism; it was his great ambition to make England a land of painters. His example, his writings, his encouragement, more than all, perhaps, his success, had all the same tendency. Without Reynolds we should not have had Lawrence.

It is a wonder that more incidents and anecdotes are not recorded of Hogarth. From his marriage

to his quarrel with Wilkes and Churchill, his life seems to have been only varied by his unlucky trip to Calais, his eccentric schemes for disposing of his pictures, and the bickerings arising from his Analysis. His history is the history of his works. Yet the few notices which he has left of himself are highly interesting; they show that he was not, as certain detractors have given out, ignorant of his native tongue. Whether he could spell or not, he certainly was at no loss for words to express his thoughts, and his thoughts were well worth expressing. He speaks of himself with a manly sincerity, remote alike from arrogance and from that affected self-depreciation which betrays the most pitiful vanity. But these memoranda tell not, what we most want to know, where he gathered the materials for his greater pictures. They tell us, however, something of the progress of his studies, and show that, self-taught as he was, the circumstances of his situation and the spirit of his age, the peculiar age of satire, of Pope, of Swift, of Fielding, and of Smollet, cooperated with his own original bias to make him what he was. His first years were spent in the obscurity of a city life, far from the gentle influences of nature, excluded from the refinements of polished society, and with little or no opportunity of contemplating the sublime or beautiful in art, but doubtless with abundant occasion to remark the mean, the low, the ludicrous, the affected and the base in man. How far the practice of silver-plate engraving tended to form his hand, I cannot judge. Heraldic figures seem far

enough removed from life and manners, yet many connoisseurs have given great prices for flagons and salvers said to be enchased by Hogarth, and have not failed to detect in his mantles and lambrequins, his griffins and wiverns, his crests and ciphers, even his chevrons and gyrons, strong indications of the Harlot's Progress and the Marriage à la Mode. But these notable prophets of the past would have found in a pair of clouted shoes, heeltapped by poor Bloomfield, considerable promise of the "Farmer's Boy." Yet there is no animal, however fabulous, hardly an inanimate object, which is not capable of a human expression; and Hogarth, in the maturity of his powers, could put a charmed life into a joint-stool, a gibbet, a three-cornered hat, or a wooden leg. He made the veriest lumber tell a story, and could inspire a sign-post with more meaning than many a well-paid and well-employed R. A. can convey into the "human face divine." But, as Allan Cunningham well observes, "All the works which the necessities of genius compel it to perform, are not therefore excellent. All artists are more or less compelled to labour for bread, and even the most fortunate often execute commissions alien to their feelings. By these things they should not be judged." Allan should have remembered this when he sneers at Sir Joshua for painting so many uninteresting lords and squires. Had he never condescended to less worthy subjects than Johnson, he never could have afforded Johnson so many good dinners.

In one or two specimens of Hogarth's armorial

engraving which I have seen, there is considerable fancy in the mantling and foliage. He had certainly an exquisite sense of beauty in the combinations of lines, however incapable he might be of representing refined, or elegant, or exalted beauty in the human form. But he never worked well to order; he could not or would not give an adequate shape to the conceptions of others. The orgasm of invention was needed to impregnate his imagination. Nothing can well be worse than his illustrations of Don Quixote and of Hudibras. Don Quixote, indeed, he could scarcely have understood. The poetry of Cervantes was quite out of his comprehension and alien to his sympathies. There was nothing Spanish or chivalric about him. He probably took it for granted that Cervantes meant to hold up knight-errantry to contempt, and saw nothing in the noblest compliment ever paid to human nature but a coarse travesty or extravagant fiction. He confounded the overstraining of a magnificent mind with crazy fatuity. Brooke and Sterne appear to have been the first Englishmen who really understood Don Quixote. In all that regards scenery and costume, Hogarth was quite ignorant of Spain. How should a man who never saw a higher eminence than Primrose Hill, depict or imagine the wild passes of the Sierra Morena? But he was altogether unqualified for a work which might well have devolved on Murillo or Salvator, and which Michael Angelo would not have esteemed beneath his ambition.

With Hudibras a superficial conjecture might suppose Hogarth at home. There he had no poetry,

no romance, no mountains or forests to grapple with; and as much of the deformed and ridiculous as he could desire. But not to mention that he wanted the historical and antiquarian knowledge necessary to give a vivid picture of obsolete vulgarities, all that is really admirable in *Hudibras* is absolutely out of the reach of the pencil. There is no painting mere thought; you cannot sketch a sophism, nor present a visible likeness of a metaphysical conceit. *Hudibras* is not a work of nature nor of humour, but of wit and of abstract intellect. Now wit cannot be painted, though the finest shades of humour may. Wit does not consist in representations of things, but in placing things in new and surprising relations to each other. It is the very antithesis of imagination, similitude and dissimilitude are its elements; but to constitute wit, the sense of dissimilitude must preponderate. Wit works with thought as punning does with words. It is essentially bodiless and invisible, and does not admit even of allegorical portraiture. You may indeed draw a pun, as Tom Hood has abundantly shown. Most political caricatures are made up of pictorial puns and metaphors. But the true wit of Butler, Swift, Pope, Congreve, and Sheridan, cannot be painted. To take one instance from Brinsley. In "The Duenna," Isaac the Israelite, neither Jew nor Christian, is compared to a dead wall between the church and the synagogue, or to the blank pages between the Old and New Testaments. How could Hogarth, or Hood, or Cruikshank pourtray this most witty simile? Not at all. Even when a witty writer does

employ visible images or actions, the painter cannot convey his wit. A figure with three hats on his head at once does not represent Lord Peter, and a ragamuffin tearing the tags off his jacket tells you nothing about Jack. A picture of a pigmy among giants, or a giant among pigmies, does not very clearly illustrate the wit of Gulliver. I do not mean to assert that there is nothing in Hudibras which addresses the eye. The grotesque forms of the knight, his steed and squire, look droll enough in picture: and the Bear-bait, Trulla's triumph, &c., might furnish good comic sketches; but even in these Hogarth has not greatly succeeded. They are more in the way of Leslie. The figures are ill drawn, vulgar, and unmeaning: nor is the story told with any of the skill which he exhibits when embodying the ideas of his own genius. For his failure in representing the ideas of others, perhaps the peculiar nature of his memory, and his very medium of thought, may be partly accountable. He thought by images, not by words; and we may easily conceive that words conveyed very slight impulses to his shaping faculty. His verbal memory was weak in the extreme, while his eye never forgot an expression or attitude which he had once noted. He had an extraordinary power of drawing, as he happily termed it, on the air. He could compose a picture in the dark without so much as chalk or charcoal; but he could not, probably, have recalled a conversation, or recomposed a sermon in the same situation.

Even when exercising his own invention, Hogarth

did not immediately discover his true vein and appropriate function. In his *Taste of the Town*, *Masquerade Ticket*, *Burlington Gate*, and other early prints, he stumbled on the unintelligible nonsense of burlesque allegory, for which he wanted playfulness of fancy. Whatever effect these juvenilia may have produced at the time, they are quite worthless now. It had been well if he had taken Wilkes's advice, and never returned to such an ungenial employment of his pencil. Few comic or satiric geniuses have found out at once where their strength lay. Fielding's comedies, operas, and burlesque tragedies, (always excepting the incomparable "Tom Thumb,") are as bad as need be. Swift began with Pindaric odes, Smollett's first production was a tragedy, Pope commenced with pastoral, and Foote made his *début* as Othello. Cervantes, Rabelais, and Sterne, were of mature age when they produced the works for which they are famous. Lucian was originally a rhetorician, Juvenal's Satires were written in his old age. Persius, indeed, was a youth; but though sometimes a fine moral writer, he is a very indifferent satirist. Congreve is almost a single exception; but Congreve's wit is mere mental elaboration expressed in a high-polished diction. His characters were traditions of the stage. He had little fancy, and no imagiuation. He never conveys a profound truth or even an imposing sophism. He could no more have conceived Falstaff than Othello. His few attempts at sentiment and generosity, as in "Love for Love," are forced and extravagant. I believe Junius caught

his manner from Congreve. Congreve was a wit without humour; and I think, on the whole, a less man than either Vanbrugh or Farquhar, though the very artificial air of his comedies, and the complete absence of anything appealing to the moral sense, make him less offensive to moral judgments. Of human nature he knew nothing; all he knew of the world is soon learned, and little worth learning.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S OPINION OF HIMSELF.

"It was the opinion of Allan Cunningham 'that his fame would rest hereafter chiefly, if not entirely, on the kindly criticisms of Sir Walter Scott and Southey.'"—*Athenæum*.

I AM right sorry that Allan should ever have said this, for he did not believe it, and therefore it was a falsehood, that is, if he said it; but I conjecture that what he meant was, that but for the encouragement of Scott and Southey, he would never have produced anything worthy to live, or have found a spot wherein to plant his fame. I should say the same of my father; but for him, my things would either not have been conceived, or would have been still-born and would have perished in the infancy of neglect. But no commendation of his can make them live an hour beyond their time.

MARGINALIA.

NOTES ON BROWN'S DICTIONARY OF THE
BIBLE, ETC.

ADVERTISEMENT.



The following notes, which exhibit incidentally the author's views on several important points of religious belief, have been transcribed, with one or two exceptions, from the margins of "Brown's Dictionary of the Bible:" the work of a Presbyterian and Calvinistic divine, for whose piety the writer expresses much respect, but whose statements he finds continual occasion to controvert. The book was given to him when a child by his godfather, and was found among his small collection of volumes after his death, enriched with a double or treble series of annotations, the last of recent date. From the care with which these notes appear to have been written, and in some instances corrected, it would seem that they were designed as studies, of which he intended to make some after use, and that they exhibit, speaking generally, his matured opinions on the subjects of which they treat; yet as the task of selection and revision has fallen into other hands, as indeed if they had been given to the world by himself it would doubtless have been under some other form, it may be hoped that they will be read with a certain indulgence, more especially as regards particular turns of expression. The matter will, it is believed, be found both interesting and instructive, in the best sense of the words, whether the conclusions of the writer in each case be adopted or rejected, while the characteristic unconstraint and *naïveté* of the style carries with it an air of genuineness, which it is impossible to mistrust, and which may well atone under all the circumstances for its occasional freedom.

NOTES ON BROWN'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE.

AARON.

“ Aaron and Hur attended Moses to the top of the adjacent hill and held up his hands, &c.”

SHOULD we understand this literally, or does it imply that Moses, when faint in prayer, had his spirit renewed by the united petitions of Aaron and Hur?

“ Some good authors think the story of the heathen Mereury to have been hammered out of Aaron's; but may we not with far more edification consider him as a personal type of Jesus Christ?”

Of all pious absurdities, I think that of converting the Scripture characters into Grecian gods and heroes the most preposterous. Wherein consists the identity of Aaron and Hermes? Aaron had a rod converted into a serpent. Mereury also bore a rod or caduceus with serpents twisted about it. Aaron was eloquent. Hermes is the orator of Olympus. It is better to pursue the parallel no farther.

Doubtless Aaron, as priest, typified the mediatorial office of Christ; but all the other correspondences are false or forced. But the desire to find Christ not only in all the law and all the prophets, but in all the favoured persons of the Old Testament, though overstrained, is an error on the safe side, very different from finding Homer, Hesiod, and Ovid in the Bible.*

* Though I reject as dangerous dallying with a serious subject that strange fancy of certain commentators, which finds the roots of all mythologies in Scripture history,—makes Jephthah's daughter into Iphigenia, Mercury into Aaron, Bacchus into Moses and Noah, Isis into the Ark, and will have it that the Iliad and Odyssey are plagiarisms from the Bible,—I think it undeniable that the Greeks, and in later times the Romans, appropriated and localised every tale and tradition, whether derived from the original settlers, or gathered in their intercourse with other nations, and identified the astronomical and pantheistic gods of the Egyptians and Orientals with their local heroes. How otherwise can we account for the many Jupiters, Venuses, Dianas, Herculeses, &c., which furnish so fair a topic for Cicero's sceptical Cotta? In like manner our own ancestors formed their romantic mythology,—their cycles of heroes, Round Tables, &c.; and told the same story a hundred ways, varying the scene and circumstance to the desire of their nationality, and not seldom Gothicising the old Greek and Roman legends. Almost every fiction has its duplicate or triplicate. Isis became Io, and Ceres Diana and Proserpine. The wanderings and lamentations of Isis for her husband were transformed into Ceres' endless search for her daughter. Tammuz, yearly wounded, communicated his attributes to a fair youth of Cyprus. The mermaid Atargatis of Syria helped to metamorphose sea-born Aphrodite into a fish in the Giant's War. Sometimes the tale is stolen without any alteration but of name. Thus Nisus and Pterelaus have each a yellow lock of immortality, which is cut off by their respective daughters, Seylla and Cometho. This must remind one of Samson. Danae intrusts her Perseus, Auge her Telephus, to an ark on the ocean; some say Bacchus was preserved in the same manner. Nor are those parallels, of which Plutarch wrote a book, confined to fable. The tale of Damon and Pythias is told by Polyænus of Evphenus and Eueritus; Dionysius is the tyrant in both cases. Perillus was not the sole patentee of the Brazen Bull; but Newton and Leibnitz (was it not?) both discovered fluxions, and Priestley and Lavoisier both decomposed water. The story of the Horatii and Curiatii, with the murder of the sister, is related of a certain Critolaus of Tegea, who fell in the battle at Thermopylæ, between Antiochus and the Romans. I find that the imitators of Phalaris and Perillus were Æmylius Censorinus, Tyrant of Ægista, and Aruntius Paterculius, who was baked in the Brazen Horse himself had made.—*From one of the Author's Note Books.*

ON HEATHEN TRADITIONS.

METIS, *i. e.*, Counsel, was said to be the first wife of Zeus. Apollodorus informs us that she gave Saturn an emetic which made him disgorge his children whom he had swallowed. Hyginus, I believe it is, asserts, that her worthy husband eat her in the first month of her pregnancy, for fear she should produce a child wiser than its father. The thunder-god had sore need to be apprehensive of his offspring, seeing how he and his sire before him obtained the monarchy of heaven; but this foreboding had as little or as ill an effect on his morals as the equally reasonable alarms of the Malthusians on their disciples of the present day. These *Múthoi* may be allegorical, but they do not say much for that exquisite purity of taste which we are told our youth are to derive from the classic writers; neither do they testify that beautiful imagination which has half paganised many scholars, and persuaded some almost to regard Christianity as a vulgarising destructive,—a puritan iconoclast. Unquestionably the genius of Greece was beautiful. Doubtless her intellect was subtle and powerful as the lightning. Her sages had a passionate, a love-sick yearning after ideal truth, which they strove in vain to body forth in the gross material of worldly policy. But whatever of beauty or of moral wisdom the poets or the philosophers infused into the popular religion, was an inscitious graft, a light, a hue and radiance like that of the sun reflected on

the everlasting front of the Alps and Andes, which fails to fertilise what it illumines. Writers on mythology have not been sufficiently careful to separate what was in its origin poetical or philosophic—however it may have gained common credence in process of time—from the traditional groundwork of polytheism, or, rather, Hylozoism on the one hand, and the commemorative-symbolic mystic ceremonies of the sacerdotal religion on the other. Many of the popular fancies—and those the most pleasing—were no more properly religious, not more essential portions of Hellenic heathenism, than the ordeals, judicial combats, the giants, dragons, and fairies of mediæval romance were portions even of monastic Christianity. The priests availed themselves of both, but neither heathenism nor popery were involved in either. The allegoric figments of the Pythagoreans and Platonists have their correlatives in the Rosicrucian and Paracelsian inventions of the 16th and 17th centuries. To the sacerdotal craft and to the quackeries of Egypt and Syria I ascribe most of what is obscene, bestial, and bloody in the ancient worship; though there is sad evidence how much the minds of the poets themselves were polluted and sensualised by the contamination of an idolatry adapted to the worst part of human nature, the corruption by which mankind are made slaves to the vilest of their sinful species. Fables like this of Metis, of Erichthonius, &c., very closely resemble some of the foul conceits of the Rabbins, adopted by Mohammed, probably to conciliate the Judaised

Arabs. Those filthy dreamers hid their doctrine, as beetles wrap their eggs, in dung.

Between the true words of God and all creeds of human invention, you will find this striking difference. The truth is ever purest at the source; nothing can be added or taken away without impairing its excellence. Whereas, falsehood is corrupt at the fountain; muddy, salt, and pestilential: and whatever of beauty or seeming good appears in heathen systems, is superinduced by the endeavours of men—not wholly evil—to accommodate their belief to their reason and kindlier affections. But the polluted stream never can run itself wholly clean; nor can all the freshness of tributary rills, derived from the ancient mountains of righteousness, do more than disguise, not correct, its aboriginal poison. Whereas, the river of Heaven, whatever swamps it may be constrained to traverse in its course—whatever drains and sewers may discharge their tribute of city-bred uncleanness into its channels—whatever dirty trades may be exercised on its banks—though it be even compelled to turn the huge factories of worldliness—urges onward to eternity, overbearing all the moles and dams constructed to arrest its speed, or make profit of its power, and depositing every unwholesome and extraneous mixture, is continually regaining the bright transparency and life-bestowing sweetness wherewith it issues from beneath the throne of God.

“None are all evil.” Man is, necessarily, originally sinful; and, alas! he is daily sinning. Yet,

neither original sin, nor actual guilt, has utterly defaced that divine image in which he was created. Even under the deadly weight of ignorance and error, of savagery or of idolatry, the good soil will put forth fair flowers and wholesome fruits; seeds of beauty and of truth insinuate themselves between the crannies of the ruin, and smile amid the heaps of desolation. God left not himself without witness, even in the isles of the Gentiles; not only the fields, the streams, the pleasant seasons, but the hearts and imaginations of men, bore testimony to His unconquerable love. Among the immortal inhabitants of the White Island, were the brothers Amphinomus and Anapius, who, when Catana was overflowed with lava-flames, and all were flying in the selfishness of irresistible terror, took their aged parents on their shoulders, resolved to save or perish with them. It is said that the subterranean fire respected their piety, and that Pluto, after their death, placed them in that happy abode, of which they were far meeter denizens than Achilles, Ajax, or other rawboned homicides, whose only claim to immortality was the multitudes whom they had qualified for it. It is good to believe such tales as this; nor should they be exiled from history, because, whether facts or not, they are truths; truths, perhaps, the more important, if they be truths of the imagination only, for they are indices of the moral feeling in which they originated. . What matters it whether the suicide of Lucretia ever occurred in such a year *ab urbe conditâ*? The truth that a great nation

esteemed the violation of woman's chastity a justifying cause for the expulsion of a royal line, is worth a hundred facts, though they were as certain as most historic details are questionable. Of course, I speak of accredited tradition, not of avowed fiction. Silius has done well in preserving the legend of Amphinomus in his too historical poem, which, however, is well worth more general reading than it obtains:—

“Tum Catana, nimium ardenti vicina Typhæo,
Et generasse pios quondam celeberrima fratres.”

Ver. 196.

“Then Catana, too near the mount of flame,
Which erst the pious brethren gave to fame.”

If the ancients were ignorant of that pure, religious love, which it is usual to ascribe to chivalry,—though it is rather to be imputed to the influence of Christianity, or the Teutonic veneration for womanhood,—they certainly knew of what heroic self-sacrifice woman is capable. Witness Homer's Penelope, Sophocles' Antigone, Euripides' Alcestes. The story of Androclea and Alcida, who, when Thebes was hard pressed by the Orchomenians, and their father, Antipœnans, refused to devote himself in compliance with a blood-demanding oracle, gave up themselves for a propitiatory offering, and were held in high worship by their grateful countrymen, is of a “mingled yarn.” That any god should demand the blood of innocence for the gratification of a malicious appetite, is the most hateful of misbeliefs; for such a god, if such there were, would be a devil. That the supreme powers are propitiated by

voluntary sacrifice, by the might of love displayed in willing suffering, is a blessed—a divine truth, hideously deformed and perverted by—no matter whom. Hercules was quite right in dedicating a lion in Diana's fane to honour those heroic virgins; and Pausanias should be commended for relating their story. Why is not Pausanias, at least in translation, studied at the Universities? Much of the best of the ancient literature is neglected, where little else is taught.

From one of the Author's Note-books.

ABOMINATION.

"Incense is an abomination to God, and the solemn meeting is iniquity. The mere observance of the Jewish ceremonies after their abolishment by the gospel, was in God's account highly detestable and criminal."

I KNOW not how it can be proved that the ceremonial law was abolished by the gospel. It never had any saving or purifying power in itself. As a covenant, it was merely national and temporal. It was binding on the Jews, like any other national law, and the more cogent as the legislator was not man, but God. It was obligatory on the Jews so long as they remained a state, and for aught that I can understand, would and will be obligatory on them should they become a state again. Upon the Gentiles it never had any greater obligation than upon Christians at this moment. Whatever was imputed for sin to the Gentiles, whether it were omission or commission, is sinful still; sinful in the unconverted

heathen, and doubly sinful in professing Christians, only because they sin against a fuller light of knowledge. But no one, I should hope, at least, considers uncircumcision any sin in the Hindoo, any more than circumcision is a merit in the Moslem. The ancient Egyptians and Colchians were circumcised; so, I believe, were many of the pagan Arabs before Mohammed; yet they were not the more included in the Old Testament covenant. Their circumcision, not being commanded, pleased not God; neither did the uncircumcision of the Greeks and Romans, on whom the seal and sign of the ancient covenant had never been imposed, offend Him. Christianity abrogated no duty where it even had been a duty, neither for Jew nor Gentile. It is obvious that the Apostles, in their own country, at least, observed all the rites of the law. This was never a question. The dispute was, whether the law was to be enforced upon the gentile converts; whether, in short, they might be received as Christians without becoming Jews; and against this oppression the great Apostle of the Gentiles set his face like a flint; not, however, because he thought any part of the law detestable or criminal, but because he knew that no part of it, considered simply as part of the Judaic law, and exclusively of its natural and eternal righteousness, or its fitness to the circumstances of the converts, was binding or necessary, and that unnecessary commands and restrictions are superstitious will-worship if imposed on ourselves, and tyranny if enforced upon others. The moral law all, indeed, are

bound to obey ; not, however, because it was the law delivered through Moses, but because it is the everlasting law of the divine, eternal, ever-living reason. It was not on Sinai for the first time that God made murder, theft, adultery, criminal ; nay, nor was Noah the first to whom homicide was forbidden. God forbade murder when he gave man life ; adultery, when he instituted marriage ; theft, when he sanctioned the division of property. There is much, very much, in the law of Moses which is not abrogated, much, at least, which it is our imprescriptible duty to obey. But there are also some things in the laws of Lycurgus, of the Twelve Tables, of the Salians and Burgundians, some even in the Koran, which we are equally bound to obey. We may be obligated to believe much, nay, all of the so-called Apostles' Creed ; but we are not obligated to believe anything only because it is in any creed of mortal compilation. No doubt, St. Paul does use the word "law" symbolically for the moral law, the law written in the heart, by which the essential antipathy of sin and righteousness is discernible ; but this he does only as a controversialist arguing with Jews, and adapting his language to the habits and associations of those whom he was addressing.

But whatever may be thought of my judgment in this momentous question, Brown's interpretation of Isaiah is glaringly wrong, and beside the question altogether. Isaiah does not speak of times when sacrifices were abrogated or superseded, but when they were rendered abominable by the impurity and

idolatry of the offerers. Moses would have said the same, under similar circumstances, without the slightest reference to a promised period when sacrifices would no more be required. The highest churchman might say as much of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, if it were in like manner rendered impious by the wickedness of the partakers.

ARK.

“The sorts of four-footed beasts which cannot live in the water, are about 72, or as Calmet divides them, 130.”

NEITHER Calmet nor the minister of Haddington were profound zoologists. If a narrative altogether supernatural and incredible, by all rules of probability, however imperative upon faith, should be explained at all, I should say that the animals in the ark were patriarchal, or representative of genera. Thus a single pair might be the stock, not only of the different varieties of dog, but of the wolf, jackal, &c. The cat and the tiger may in the ark have abode in the same loins. So also of the weasel kind, &c. This hypothesis will apply still more strongly to the birds of the anserine, gallinaceous, passerine, corvine species, &c.

No fact rests upon so strong a tradition as the Deluge, and the preservation of the one family in the ark. This may be called historical. But that all the animal tribes of all climates, laying aside their antipathies and changing their fierce and carnivorous natures

(as Horne assures us they did), assembled on the eve of the flood, and, entering the ark, abode in peace together till the waters subsided, is what cannot be credited on human testimony, except as a direct and continuous miracle; and, if a miracle, why endeavour, by clumsy conjectures, to make it less miraculous, as if supernatural power went in a go-cart?

"Was not the Jewish ark typical of Jesus Christ?"

With all my aversion to mystification, I am the last to deny or undervalue the real and prophetic mysteries of the old law. Most awful was the mystery of that holy ark; but did it not rather typify the Church? and was not the Shechinah itself not so much a type as an actual presence of the divine Logos?

ASHTAROTH.

No doubt Ashtaroth, like Isis, was *natura naturans*—the female of the two great sexes that animate the world, sometimes symbolised by the moon, sometimes by the earth, sometimes by the lower atmosphere, as distinguished from ΖΕΥΣ, the empyreal heaven, sometimes the radical moisture, sea-born Cytherea. It is by no means improbable that some mutilated masked and desecrated recollection of Eve entered into this compost of female idolatry: nor is it too much to say that the christened Pagans retained this polyonymous she-deity, and worshipped her under the

name of the Holy Virgin, in the same manner as the Greeks engrafted the adventures of certain Theban heroes on the *μύθοι* of the Oriental Hercules and Bacchus, converted the Syrian Thammuz into a smock-faced boy of Cyprus, and the Egyptian Isis into the daughter of Inachus. Luckily,—say, rather, blessedly,—enough of Christianity always remained in the Church to preserve the adoration of the Sanctissima Purissima from the obscene emblems, and horrid impurities of the older idolatry. Mary was exalted to the impersonate idea of pure maternity, while Ashtaroth, Isis, the mother of the gods, Aphrodite, the Roman Flora (who, whatever was the origin of her festivals, clearly meant the productive power of the earth, and not any individual prostitute), became the mere representatives of carnality, fit associates for Pan and Priapus.

AZAZEL.

“Our version rightly renders it *the scape-goat*; Witsius, Cocceius, and others will have it to signify Satan.”

. “That proud honour claim’d
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall,
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl’d
 The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind.”

Paradise Lost, B. i.

No man is competent to edit Milton with the illustrations he deserves and requires, who is not acquainted with the demonology of the Rabbins and of the early Christians, heretic as well as orthodox.

According to the Arabians, Djinn-Azazil is the highest order of angels, whereof Eblis was chief before his fall.

BAAL.

Οὐκ ἔκαμψαν γόνυ τῆ Βάαλ. Erasmus and Beza plausibly account for the feminine article τῆ by understanding εἰκόνη, "they have not bowed a knee to the image of Baal," which, as Baal was a mere non-entity, was all they could bow to. So, too, Pasor. But would it be speculating further than most expositors take the liberty of doing, if we suppose St. Paul, by the feminine prefix, meant to insinuate the real object to which the Baalites of Elijah's time did bow—to wit, Jezabel? Seriously speaking, I believe idolatry, as practised by the princes of Israel and their flatterers, to have been merely political,—an anti-national treason,—to which they were induced partly by the desire to be in the fashion of other kings, partly by dislike of the control of the law and of the priests, while the multitude were allured by the gorgeous sensualism of the idolatrous rites, by discontent at the priestly government and demands, and the common partiality of the ignorant for conjurers, fortune-tellers, and, in general, for religion without morality.

BAPTISM.

THE Church of England is express and admirable

in its article on infant baptism, which it enforces, as most agreeable to the practice of ancient times. Now, we may always assume that the practice of ancient times was agreeable to apostolic institution, when the contrary cannot be proved. But he who asserts that infant baptism is enforced, recommended, or even allowed by any text of Scripture, says the thing that is not; a course to which our divines are too often impelled by their ultra-Protestant determination to find their whole discipline and practice, as well as their creeds, in the letter of the Bible.

BASHAN.

“God’s *bringing his people from Bashan, a hill on the east, and the depths of the sea on the west, imports his recovery of the Jews from captivity,*” &c.

IF, as is generally and probably supposed, the 68th Psalm were uttered on the bringing up of the ark of the covenant to Zion, as described in 2 Sam., vi., 1 Chron., xiii. xv., it can only refer typically, not historically, to the captivity and dispersion. But the historical sense, if not all, is sufficient. It is strictly in poetical order, that the Psalmist should first bethink him of the smaller and more recent struggles of the Israelites with their eastern borderers, designated collectively by Bashan, as an English minstrel of the north country might designate the Scotch marauders as Ettrick or Galloway, and then mount to the primary and

miraculous deliverance through the Red Sea. From the mention of the Temple, ver. 29, I have been half induced to think that the psalm was produced when the ark was deposited in the Temple by Solomon, but on second thoughts I reject the supposition. David had thought of being himself the builder of the Temple, which was forbidden him, for a reason which the author of the thanksgiving ode should have laid to heart. Besides, the Hebrew may not necessarily imply a temple, but any fixed place of divine worship. The psalm altogether makes me sorely repent my neglect of Hebrew, which I wish I may yet have time and means of repairing. Louth himself confesses, "nobilissimo poëmati plurimas insidere obscuritates." The discrepancies between the two authorised versions are perplexing, especially in the sixth verse. I wish I could find that any good MS. or ancient version (I set much by ancient versions) justified the Prayer-book reading; for truly it is God that maketh men to be of one mind in a house, and He alone can. The thirteenth verse I would I might, with due respect to the text, refer to the ark itself, recovered, all glittering and glorious, from its captivity and exile.

BATS.

"Bats, being unclean under the law, might represent persons fearful, unbelievers, ignorant, and hypocritically wicked."

RATHER, I should say, they represented half-believers,

almost Christians, neither fish, flesh, nor good red-herring; haunters of the twilight between faith and infidelity, that shrink from the full sun of the gospel,—that flit about, not on the natural wings of faith, but on a sort of pseudo-ptern. The inhabitants of Borsippa, who fed on bats, did not much regard the Mosaic law, which, nevertheless, I have little inclination to violate in this case. Linnæus honours the bat by placing it among the Primates, along with man, the ape, and the lemur.

BEASTS.

BEASTS want speech, because they want discourse of reason,—because their impressions are as ours would be, if we had not reason, single, unconnected, or connected by mechanical associations only. Beasts do speak, *i. e.*, they have evidently some mode of communicating their wants and wishes to each other and to man. Dogs even go so far as to communicate facts. They have words, whether those words be expressed by sounds, or by gestures, or by smell; but they have no *language*, or a language in which it is impossible that there should be any grammar. The case of parrots imitating human utterance is altogether out of point and logic; for if beasts could speak rationally, it by no means follows that they would speak as men do. It is possible they might have a very perfect language, as rich and various,

and with a grammar as artificial as the Greek, and yet not utter any sound. Darwin's notion that clear ideas come by handling, though bizarre enough, is more plausible than the hypothesis that reason is the child of speech.

BEETLE.

THAT the word Chargol does not mean the black-beetle, or the diamond-beetle, or the mantis, much less the cantharide beetle, I am confident; but what it does mean I believe will never be the subject of a stoical *κατάληψις*. This is the less to be regretted, as few persons, will probably avail themselves of the permission to eat the Chargol. Yet it is hard to say. Lalande, the astronomer, was fond of munching great spiders. Children in South America pull the hideous scolopendras out of their holes, and cranch them with high gusto; so at least says "the Voice of Humanity." I have heard that the Indian soy is partly composed of a sort of beetle. According to Herodotus, the Budini, a Scythian tribe, who painted themselves blue and red, like our British ancestors, *φθειροτραγέουσι μούνοι τῶν ταυτῆ*, were the only louse-eaters in those parts. Whether this remarkable diet produced the same effect as that of the acridophagi, who were devoured at forty by locusts of their own breeding, we are not informed. Indeed, I suspect the integrity of the text. I have little doubt it should be *κρεοτραγέουσι*, or something

equivalent. Not that the eating, what has eaten so many philosophers, is itself so incredible, but it does not follow from the context; and though a hexapede may be very well for a relish, I can hardly suppose them abundant enough anywhere to compose the staple article of food. It is said that in 1688 there was a plague of cockchafers, county Galway, and that the people, to whom they left little else to eat, dressed and eat them after the manner of locusts.

BEHEMOTH.

I DO not believe Behemoth was either an elephant or a hippopotamus. We shall find him, and leviathan too, in a fossil state by-and-bye.

BERYL.

THAT the Hebrews had a language of jewels, as some of the modern Orientalists have a language of flowers, and as heraldry has a language of colours, I have no doubt; but it was a language which modern commentators have not learned to read. The subject is worth study. The magical properties ascribed to gems by the Arabs and other Orientals, have no scriptural foundation.

BIBLE.

I AM informed that my grandfather, John Coleridge, assisted by a German, whose name I forget, but whom S. T. Coleridge met in Germany, had no small hand in the labour of Kennicott's Bible. *Sic vos non vobis*.*

BIRD.

"Our translation likens the Jews to a *speckled* bird, and the Chaldeans to *ravenous* birds; but might not the sentence be better rendered: Mine heritage is unto me as a fierce and wild hyæna,—has abused my kindness, and returned me hatred for my love. '*Therefore every ravenous beast is upon her.*'"—*Jer.* xii. 9.

UTTERLY unacquainted with the Hebrew text, I venture to prefer the authorised translation, as presenting a much more natural and coherent image. "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird; all the birds round about are against me." I know nothing about *speckled*, but I venture to interpret it a mongrel, or hybrid bird,—a bird strange to the birds of the forest. Now the tendency of wild birds to attack any exotic who may have made his way to the wood, has been remarked by naturalists, as well as fabulists; but for a poetic or prophetic illustration, popular

* But it is not the labour of such undertakings, or even the skill, in which the credit of them mainly consists, but the first conception, and the subsequent direction of them.—D. C.

credence, or a well-known fable, would be sufficient authority. And what could more resemble Israel seeking the alliance and society of the Gentiles, who hated and scorned her, than such a stray party-coloured fowl, consorting with, and pecked at by the natives of the wood.

 BITTERN.

“Nineveh and Babylon became a *possession for the bittern*, when the spot was partly turned into a fen, or pool of water, Isaiah xiv, 23, and xxi, 1.—Zeph. ii. 14. But the Kippod is by some interpreters rendered an owl, an osprey, a tortoise, a beaver, and Bochart will have it a hedge-hog.”

HERE again I must declare my adhesion to our own good Bible. “I will also make it a habitation for the bittern, and pools of water;” a prophecy wonderfully fulfilled, as good Father Rollin has shown. The beaver, it might be said, would suit the pool as well as the bittern. Let us try Zephaniah: “And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her (Nineveh), all the beasts of the nations (perhaps alluding to the hordes of Kurdes and Turcomans, and Arabs, that frequent the lands where Babylon and Nineveh were once); both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it.” Here I prefer the marginal reading, “chapters;” unclean fowl should roost on the capitals of fallen pillars. Whether the word Kaath be here rightly rendered cormorant, or rather pelican, as in the margin, is of the less moment as both are birds frequenting watery places. At all

events, the bittern is more naturally coupled with either cormorant or pelican, than tortoise, hedgehog, or owl. It may be objected, that in a preceding verse the Prophet declares that Nineveh shall be made a desolation, and dry like a wilderness; but this must either be understood of the remoter territory, or of wells and canals choked up with rubbish, or express not physical siccidity, but that unfruitfulness which in the desert results from want of moisture; not that the Tigris, on which Nineveh stood, and by which its drunken inhabitants were overwhelmed, should become suddenly dry, though some of its ancient branches may be no more discernible.

CHRISTIANS.

"They, by divine direction, first received this designation at Antioch."

WHERE did Mess John discover that the name Christians was bestowed by Divine appointment, more than the names Whiggamore, Ranter, Whistler, Quaker? Does he conclude the Divine imposition of the name from the ambiguity of the verb *χρηματίζειν*, which sometimes does signify *oraculum edere*? There can be no rational doubt that the name was given in the same spirit of mockery wherein Pilate called Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews. But it never occurred to me before this morning, June 2nd, 1847, when I read it in the Athenæum, that

χριστιανὸς, being in form a Latin, not a Greek, derivative, must have been invented by persons familiar with the Latin language, who hearing the believers, who probably assumed no distinctive appellation to themselves, preaching Ἰησοῦς as ὁ Χρῖστος, and invoking Ἰησοῦ Χρῖστε, and not knowing that Χρῖστος was the Greek translation of מָשִׁיחַ, or Messiah, the expected Redeemer and hope of all nations, probably thought it the proper name of their founder (as some nominal Christians fancy to this day), or a god newly introduced into the Pantheon (as if the invocation, Ἰησοῦ Χρῖστε, were like Io Pœan, or Io Bacche), or else some magical, or cabalistic, or merely cant word. Thus the Russians call the English Isaakis, from their frequent repetition of *I say*.

The word *χριστιανος* occurs but three times in the New Testament, and never in such position as to induce a belief that it was adopted as a generic name by the Church itself, whose members spoke of each other as Ἀδελφοί, Πιστοί, Ἅγιοι.

1st.—Acts xi. 26: Εγένετό δε χρηματίσαι πρῶτον ἐν Αντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητάς χριστιάνους. Χρηματίσαι in the neuter passive sense, “to be called,” “nuncupari,” does not seem to be very common. Beza and Scapula cite but one instance in illustration of the text, and that from Plutarch De Virtutibus Mulierum (a treatise that ought to be edited with copious prolegomena, notes, illustrations and translation, and printed on satin, gorgeously bound by Mr. Westley, and laid at the feet of her Majesty). Plutarch says, that among the Xanthians children are named

χρηματίζειν,* after the mother, not after the father. The old Latin "cluere" and English "hight" are something similar. Erasmus's suggestion that χρηματίζειν, in this sense comes ἀπὸ τοῦ χρήματος, because folks were called after their trades, is unsatisfactory. From Romans vii. 3, Μοιχαλὶς χρηματίζει, I should render it, "got the name," but *non erat his locus*.

2nd.—Heb. xxvi. 28: Ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθεις χριστιάνον γένεσθαι. It is very likely that some justice or other may have told George Fox or William Penn that he was almost persuaded to become a Quaker, but this did not prove that the nickname Quaker was given by Divine appointment, or that it was assumed by the disciples of Fox at all

3rd.—1 Peter iv. 15, 16: "Let not any of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, or malefactor," ἢ ὡς ἀλλοτριό-ἐπίσκοπος, as a pretender to rights of episcopacy or surveillance in what does not concern him. Εἰ δὲ ὡς χριστιάνος μὴ αἴσχρον θέσθω, plainly implying, that Christian, a name in which the believer in Jesus as the Anointed One should glory, had been given by the world as a name of derision. Had the primitive Church taken a name from their Lord it would rather have been Ἰησουταῖ, or, better, Ἰησουχριστιάνοι, than simply χριστιάνοι. They were, however, perfectly right to adopt and sanctify the invention of heathen scorn.

Beza's misomonachal œstrum stings him in his

* Νόμος ἦν τοῖς Ξανθίοις μὴ πατρόθεν, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ μητρὸς χρηματίζειν.

comment on Acts xi. 26. After justly observing that the naming of the body of Christ after its head gave no countenance to the naming of sects after their numerous doctors, as Lutherans, Calvinists, Zuinglians, &c., he falls tooth and nail on the Jesuits: "Divinitus autem factum est ut locustæ, quos nostrâ memoriâ puteus Abyssi evomuit, callide pro monachis, et à suo Ignatio Ignatianis, Clerici societatis Jesu, et Jesuitæ voluerint cognominari: sic nimirum imprudentes testati, dum commune Christianorum nomen fastidiunt, se novum Jesum, qui non sit Christus, sectari, et eum esse clerum, qui minime sit Christianus." From the same note I learn a fact, and an etymology of which I was not before aware. "Iis vero quid facias, qui non tam à Christo, quam ab illo suo idolo (Chrismate inquam illo quod etiam salutare et plenis buccis adorare non pudet) se Christianos dici contendunt?" But were there any such? Has not Beza taken a flight of rhetoric (plenty such like are to be found in his own hallucinations) for a serious assertion? I can forgive honest John Brown, and like him the better for all his vagaries of zeal, but I can *only* forgive Beza.

 CHURCH.

"Above a million of them (the Waldenses) were slain."

IN the statistics of massacres and persecutions it is generally safe to divide by 5. Men must increase in more than geometrical ratio to supply the insatiable appetite of martyrologists.

COCKATRICE.

THE cockatrice is not the only fabulous creature referred to in Scripture. The sacred writers were not members of the Zoological Society; and, if they had been, still they might, like other poets, allude to animals whose sole existence was in popular belief.

COLLOPS.

"To have collops of flesh on one's flanks (Job, xv, 27,) is expressive of great prosperity and luxury."

ELEGANT! Now, these phrases never offend a just and pure taste when read in their place of Scripture; but when stuck in solitary state in concordances or dictionaries, or quoted in sermons, or dilated in commentary or paraphrase, they become ludicrous, if not disgusting, as any one who is well-read in Quarles and other simple, pious writers of the 16th and 17th centuries, and with metrical paraphrases in general (Blackmore's on Job, for instance), may satisfy themselves. The collops might perhaps have been softened in the translation. Collops are slices of flesh cut off, and, therefore, cannot be properly said of flesh on the flanks. The passage has an anthropagous sound, from which I doubt not the Hebrew is clear. A polite preacher, for "collops," would read "cotelets."

COTTAGE.

“The earth shall be removed like a cottage.”—Isaiah, xxiv, 20.

FROM this simile we may conjecture that the practice of depopulation, the laying together of small properties in sheep-walks, parks, and chases, and of course the demolition of small tenements, was one of the sins that brought the wrath of God upon the house of Israel. (See Isaiah, v. 8; Job, iii. 14.)

 ELIAKIM.

“Was he not a type of Jesus, our great Minister of State, and who is over the whole household of God? Doth He not succeed a treacherous Adam?” &c.

No; unless it be insisted that every office of the Jewish Court was typical.

Surely there was no resemblance between the unsuccessful mission of Eliakim and the great embassy of Jesus. Shebna bore no great resemblance to the first Adam, who, though sinful, was not treacherous.

In Isaiah there are prophecies of the Saviour, clear and irrefragable; but, in what relates to Eliakim, I can see nothing but the natural exultation of a Hebrew patriot for the removal of a corrupt minister and the appointment of an honest successor. All that is said of Eliakim has a palpable reference to his official duties as treasurer, and chamberlain, and butler. There is also an allusion to his favour with the king, his influence in the disposal of royal

bounties, and the prosperity of his family and kindred. The 24th verse is not very perspicuous, at least as translated. It seems to allude primarily to his charge over the king's plate, and figuratively to the dependence of the weaker members of his father's house, perhaps of the state at large, the vessels of small quantity, upon his integrity, and the security of his [remaining] in the king's good graces. The 25th verse seems to foretell his fall, and that of all his followers, but possibly the denunciation may be levelled against Shebna.

Yet it must be owned that the obvious transfer of Eliakim's office and authority to Him, that indeed opens and none shall shut, goes a good way to justify the interpretation of the chapter-heading. At all events, the type was the keeper of the household, not the person Eliakim.

ENOCH.

"The book of Enoch stupidly maintained that, before the flood, the angels, seeing the beautiful daughters of men," &c.

As for the stupidity which maintained the loves of the angels and the Cainite women, it is a great liberty with the text to deny it. I cannot see why a cross between the race of Seth and of Cain should be giants, which might naturally enough arise from the union of superior natures with the daughters of men. The supposition, which Moore has borrowed, I believe, from the Rabbis, that the pure angelic essence

became gross and carnal by the operation of lust, is by no means discordant with some parts of Scripture, and is quite in the vein of the Fathers. Nay, do not certain doctrines, held orthodox, imply that some such derogation took place in the body of man himself, and, *per contra*, is it not a Catholic opinion that the body may, by divine contemplation, discipline, fasting, and virginity, attain, even in this world, to a purity, a lightness, a sensibility to spiritual accesses akin to the complexion of angels; and is not our vile body hereafter to be refined and glorified to pure light, and become the instrument and vehicle of celestial passions only. If flesh may be thus exalted by holiness, may not spirit be proportionately debased by lust—growing, by love of earth, earthy? Heathen tradition strongly supports this literal interpretation, for which, however, I am far from vouching; but Mr. Brown should not have accused the book of Enoch of stupidity. It is obvious to me that some book, purporting to contain the history or prophecies of Enoch, if not directly ascribed to him as author, was extant in the time when Jude's epistle was written.

FISH.

“What fish lodged the prophet Jonah in her belly is not agreed, &c. We know of no fish larger than the whale, except Bishop Pontoppidan's *kraken*,” &c.

THE minister of Haddington should have had too much respect both for Jonah and for the whale to bring them into company with Pontoppidan, Nurem-

bergius, the Kraken, and the bones brought from Joppa, which, according to Pliny, belonged to the sea-monster, from whose jaws Andromeda was delivered by Perseus, a supposition inconsistent with the fact that the said monster was petrified by the new-severed head of Medusa. To be serious, nothing is more absurd in philosophy, nor more inexpedient in theology, than the stating or evading physical objections to miracles, which are *vi termini* hyperphysical. Such cavils are inadmissible even when opposed to the most apocryphal *θαύματα* of heathens or monks.

GENEALOGIES.

"But since Jesus is come in the flesh there is no reason to give heed to useless or endless registers of descent." (*Titus*, iii. 9.)

THERE could be no reasons for giving heed to useless registers at any time. The genealogies to which St. Paul objects are not heraldic pedigrees, but the heretical æons,—the endless genealogies of emanations set forth by the Basilidians and others who were not so much schismatic as counterfeit Christians. They attempted to do what Mahomet succeeded in doing—to set up a rival religion recommended by clumsy or fantastic adoptions of Christian phrases, but were no more Christians than the primitive Anabaptists, Familists, &c., were Lutherans.

GIANTS.

“ The Hebrews called them Nephilim.”

IT is not quite impossible that some vague tradition of these Nephilim might give rise to the Greek fable of the Centaurs, born of *νεφέλη*, a cloud. Many tales were doubtless invented out of names, which the Greeks always interpreted out of their own language. It is more than probable that much of the antediluvian and postdiluvian history is mystified in the earlier mythology of Greece, but I can discern no traces of Hebrew history, nothing later than the call of Abraham. Iphigenia is not Jephtha's daughter, neither is Bacchus Moses, nor Aaron Hermes, nor Pandora nor Hermione Eve, nor Hercules Samson.

 GOMER.

I WISH I could see Bochart's commentary on the tenth chapter of Genesis. I deny not that Gomer might be the ancestor of the Cymry and Gael, but the name is a very uncertain index. The discoveries of modern linguists, and diligent examination of inscriptions, ruins, &c., may yet throw much additional light on the primary distribution of the three great races. Even the antiquities of a lost civilisation beyond the Atlantic may give light backward over tracts of ages, till we arrive finally at the tents of the patriarchs. Of this I am confident, that the more fearlessly and honestly the inquiry is conducted, the stronger and more satisfactory will be the confirmation of Scripture resulting from it in the end.

JACOB.

"When the marriage came as a 'providential punishment for deceiving his dim-eyed father,' &c.

WHERE is it asserted that this was a providential punishment? Certainly not in Genesis. This haphazard guessing at the motives of God's dealings with his people is exceedingly presumptuous. Neither in purchasing his brother's birthright, nor in forestalling the blessing, does it appear that Jacob sinned against the light that he possessed, any more than in marrying two sisters. At all events the narrative is not recorded by the Holy Spirit, either for imitation nor for moral judgment, but to set forth the purely prophetic and ministerial character of all human, and especially sacerdotal, blessings and curses. It is not for man to bless or curse at his own discretion. Isaac could not be ignorant that to Jacob was the promise given, and in attempting to bestow it upon his own favourite, he sinned against his own ghost. Neither father, bishop, priest, nor deacon, can bless whom God has not blessed. Of course, this consideration does not impose any new limitation on the prayers of the church; but prayers are not authoritative blessings. Many articles of Jacob's conduct, judged by Christian ethics, are more censurable or less excusable than his purloining the blessing; but to so judge them is not only to be wise beyond what is written, but to show a pitiful narrowness of mind. Morality, considered as a law of action, independent

of, and prior to, all express moral science, was as unknown to the patriarchs of the house of Israel, as the Newtonian system. They knew as little of ethics as of Aristotle. To obey the express commands of their Heavenly Father comprised their whole duty of man. What had not been *bonâ fide* forbidden, they conceived to be innocent, and to them it doubtless was so. They do not appear to have had any notion of casuistry or analogical reasoning. It were well if human parents humbly imitated the All-Father in His education of the chosen. Do as you are bid is the one moral law that a child can comprehend, nor is any study, prematurely commenced, more pernicious than that of ethical philosophy, whether the utilitarian, the sentimental, or the ideal system be adopted.

ISAAC.

EXCEPT in his sacrifice, which, as it was not actual nor propitiatory, very imperfectly represents the death of the Saviour, there is nothing typical in Isaac. His birth, indeed, was miraculous, and he was a child of promise, but in this he rather represented the church than the Lord.

ISAIAH.

"Isaiah's separate history of Uzziah's reign was uninspired, and is now lost."

WHERE did the minister of Haddington learn that Isaiah's history of Uzziah was uninspired? Rather is it probable that those portions of it which had a religious, and therefore permanent interest, were extracted by Ezra or Nehemiah, omitting what was mere civil history. For be it borne in mind, that the books of Kings and of Chronicles do not contain a history of the kingdom of Israel, but only of its theocracy. One point only is kept in view, *i. e.*, the proof that in the worship of Jehovah, and the observance of the law, Israel was great and prosperous, and that every departure from the way of the Lord was a step towards ruin and subjugation: in short, that the Hebrew state, unlike the kingdoms of the world, was ordained to flourish by righteousness, and to decay by iniquity. Whatever in the public transactions did not bear clearly and directly upon this point, is either passed over, or slightly alluded to. I think I can perceive the hand of Providence in the loss of the merely civil and military histories of Israel and Judah. Had they survived, how many things might have been drawn into precedent that were never so meant, to the serious disturbance of policy and public morals.

KID.

“A kid’s flesh was never to be boiled in its mother’s milk, as that would have been an appearance of cruelty, and an imitation of Heathen superstition.”

WHAT heathen superstition would have been imitated by seething the kid in its mother’s milk, I know not; and as for the appearance of cruelty, I don’t see that it is crueller to boil a kid in milk than in water, nor in its mother’s milk than in any other milk. The expression is plainly proverbial, and as the context shows, meant simply, live and let live. Be content with moderate gains. Do not grudge the Lord his part, the stranger his part. Be content to shear without flaying. I wish our sticklers for the rights of property, our Harry Gills that gather up the dry branches snapped by the charitable winds, lest the poor should boil their porridge gratis, our church-reformers and political economists, would remember not to seethe the kid in its mother’s milk.

 LANGUAGE.

“When we observe the simplicity and emphasis of the Hebrew tongue,” &c.

A BETTER argument for the primogeniture of the Hebrew than any here adduced, is, that the names of the antediluvians are all significant in that language. But though I believe the Hebrew, as conveyed in the earlier books of Scripture, to be

the oldest language now extant, either in speech or writing, I am not quite so confident that it was the primæval. Moses might be directed to translate the names. I see no reason for referring the diversities of language to the miraculous confusion at Babel. It is contrary to the analogy of the divine dealings that any miracle should have permanent effects. I am disposed to believe all dialects to be corruptions of that which was innate in our first parents.

LAUGH.

"God *laughs* at men," &c.

PLATO is wrath at the γέλωσ ἄσβεστος of the gods at Vulcan's performing the office of Hebe. Yet the Hebrews did not scruple to ascribe laughter to a God awful far above even Plato's conception—a bone for your literal expositors. The Spartans had a Θεὸς Γέλωσ, and yet they were a grave people.

LETTERS.

"The invention of letters is so marvellous and useful that I am almost tempted to believe God himself the author of it, perhaps in the tables of the Law."

IF so, it is odd that the Bible does not mention it, as it records the invention of music, metallurgy, and nomadic life. As for the hypothesis that letters were

first used in the two tables, it is quite untenable. I have no doubt that the Book of Job, if not the earlier portions of Genesis, are older than the Law. Moses refers to written characters as things known and familiar. Can we suppose that so extraordinary a revelation would not have been noted?

LEVI.

THAT the seed of the murderer should be chosen to the priestly office is subject for deep thought. It strongly confirms the veracity of the books of Moses, and the authenticity of Jacob's prophecies. Had the blessings been coined, there can be little doubt that the priestly race would be distinguished.

LUKE.

I HAVE as strong a belief as the case warrants that the Gospel of St. Luke is the eldest of the four, written during St. Paul's first visit to Rome, and forming one work with the Acts of the Apostles. 1st. If there had been inspired or apostolic writings on the life and doctrines of Christ extant when Luke composed his Gospel, would he have mentioned them so slightly in his exordium as *πόλλοι*, or could he have been ignorant of their existence? 2ndly. Luke is mentioned by St. Paul as famous for the Gospel. This certainly is well explained, if we understand it

of his written Gospel; but it is an unusual phrase if it only means famous as a preacher. 3rdly. The Acts of the Apostles, evidently subsequent to Luke's Gospel, were evidently finished soon after the period at which the book closes; probably while Paul was at Rome for the first time: else why was not the history carried forward? But this is earlier than the probable date of Matthew and Mark. Whether these arguments should weigh against tradition, I will not say. It is a matter of mere curiosity.

MAMRE.

OF the oak of Mamre, which, however, we are told was not an oak, but a terebinth tree, Hebrew *ailon*, there is some interesting intelligence in the Omniana, to wit, that the Jews, the pagan Arabs, and the Christians united in their reverence for it, and used to assemble amicably, and perform their respective rites, till Constantine put a stop to this impious toleration. Eusebius is said to have been the ecclesiastical commissioner in the case. A fair, no uncommon offspring of religious pilgrimages on the supposed locality of relics, was held under "the trysting tree." Samitus, about A.D. 1300, says that the tree was still in being in his age, though the pilgrims were in the habit of cutting away pieces of it, as less devout admirers have done from Shakspeare's mulberry. Some held that it was as old as the creation; others, that it was planted by Abraham,

and was the tree under which he entertained the angels; but the prettiest, and, therefore, in such a matter, the best opinion is, that it grew from a staff planted by one of the angels.

As a companion to the oak of Mamre, let me introduce the *bon Homme de Tatonville*. Tatonville must be a village near Honfleurs, at the mouth of the Seine. About one hundred years ago the Seine changed its course, and flowed close to the left bank instead of keeping to the right, as it had done before, and now does again. This change sorely perplexed the pilots and steersmen, and many lives might have perished but for the vigilance of an old pilot of Tatonville, who, no longer able to buffet with the currents, and expose his life to save others, resolved not to abandon his vocation, but went before dawn, and stayed till late at night on a far surveying hill, calling aloud to any passing vessel, warning them of the hidden and shifting sandbanks, and directing them how to steer aright. When he felt at last "that death with him was dealing," he prayed to God to send one to take his place, whereupon his staff took root, and became a tree, and still stands where he was wont to stand, and is called *le bon Homme de Tatonville*. One of its branches is so bent that it seems to turn back almost to the stem, while another, extended, points to the distance, and its foliage has some resemblance to a large head with a sailor's broad-brimmed hat upon it. The people made a saint of the old man, and tell of the miracles wrought by him. I hope the tree is still preserved, but

all I know about it is from the review of a book called "Excursions in Normandy," — *Athenæum*, p. 729.

MANASSEH.

NOTHING spoils a king or endangers a nation more than a long minority. The worst Roman emperors, Nero, Commodus, Heliogabalus, were mere boys on their accession. Henry III., Richard II., Henry VI., though not the worst, were among the weakest and most unfortunate of our princes. Three long minorities, those of Louis XIII., XIV. and XV., prepared France for the Revolution. Joash is an instance of a prince, virtuous in his youth, and corrupted afterwards; but it is to be feared he fell away as soon as he felt his real power. Power, at all times perilous, is trebly perilous in nonage. Nor is the matter much mended if the exercise of authority be kept awhile in abeyance. The impatience to rule alone must have an unfavourable influence on education, and he must be of a weak spirit indeed who does not look on his tutor with something akin to dislike. Indulgence corrupts, severity exasperates; and flatterers are always at hand to forestall the favours of majority. The youth of Edward VI., though honourable to himself, was not less disastrous to England, from the unprincipled ambition of his regents Somerset and Northumberland. Well does the Preacher say, "Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child," *Eccl.* x. 16. The succession of brothers has certainly

some advantages over direct lineal inheritance. In half barbarous or absolute states it is in a manner indispensable.

MANNA.

EHRENBERG—whom I know nothing about, except that his name and his naturalising of miracles declares him German—supposes that the manna of the Israelites flowed, and still flows, from the Tamarisk, in consequence of the puncture of an insect of the coccus kind. Some exudation of this kind is certainly among extant productions of nature; but Brown is right—we must believe the manna miraculous if we believe the Bible.

“Was not this manna a figure of Christ,” &c.

That Christ is indeed the spiritual food of his people, the bread of life that came down from Heaven, what Christian knows not? But I cannot approve of this fashion of making a type dove-tail with its antitype. Types and parables are like Homeric similes. They go not on all fours.

Mr. Brown, who was probably a low sacramentarian, makes no allusion to the mystery of the Eucharist, in which Christ most eminently appears as the spiritual manna, though St. Paul evidently justifies this interpretation (1 Cor. x. 3), and many sayings of Christ himself have the same bearing. Yet there is

something pleasing in the worthy minister's improvements upon manna. We can never be far wrong in giving a spiritual—a Christian significance, to the miracles of mercy or of judgment, wrought under the old dispensation. But in applying the merely national and civil acts of the Jews under the law to ourselves or to the Church, we may err perilously.

MARRIAGE.

"Polygamy is evidently contrary to the law of God."

CONTRARY to the spirit of the Gospel certainly, but not to any definite enactment. The strongest argument against polygamy, I never remember to have seen distinctly stated. Man should never take a liberty which he refuses to his correlative. It is unjust to give the husband a privilege for which the wife has no compensation. Now it is obvious that to allow polygamy to both parties were to defeat every purpose of marriage. The husband demands the whole affection of the wife, and man's heart is not so much larger than woman's that she should give all, and be content with a fraction in return. Neither is the love which can be satisfied with less than all a just or satisfactory answer to such love as a good man would bestow on her whom he makes bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh :

"I'd rather be a toad,
And feed upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses."

The true reason why polygamy was not absolutely prohibited to the Patriarchs or to the Israelites under the Mosaic dispensation, was that they had not arrived at that point of moral and intellectual development, at which the love that ought to subsist between a Christian pair is possible. We must also recollect the low condition of women in all oriental countries. Woman never began to take her just place in society before Christianity. Even yet, she has not fully attained it,—for Christianity, though in its mysteries permanently complete, admitting neither addition nor diminution, is, in its moral and social influences, progressive, crescent, a germ continually unfolding new leaves, blossoms, or fruits, subduing things to itself by degrees and measures, eternally appointed, yet continually promoted, by the free-will of emancipated Christians. Christianity is not a law, but a life, a power, and energising idea. Hence, too, I conjecture the reason that Christ and his Apostles have nowhere expressly prohibited polygamy, slavery, or many other things undeniably adverse to the pure doctrine. The changes which the truth is to work in positive laws, customs, and policies, are to proceed from within, not to be forcibly imposed from without. When the tree is made good the fruit will be good of necessity. When we are really a Christian people, we shall of necessity have a Christian state, Christian rule, and Christian liberty. No possible good can come of compelling men to act as Christians, before they really are so. Popery, by forbidding marriage to the clergy, did far more to impair the honour due

to the nuptial state, to lower the standard of matrimonial morals, than it compensated by making wedlock a ceremonial and typical sacrament, and referring the whole management of it to the priesthood. If marriage be not essentially holy—if it be contracted on selfish, sensual, unsanctified principles, the performance of the religious rite cannot hallow it, any more than the swearing a falsehood can make it a truth.

MARY MAGDALENE.

LARDNER, in an epistle to Thomas Hanway, throws discredit on the fact of Mary Magdalene's identity with the sinner, which seems to have no foundation in any of the Gospels; neither is it apparent that she was the sister of Martha and of Lazarus, who broke the alabaster box of spikenard over the head of the Saviour in the house of Simon the leper. Why, indeed, should the Mary who dwelt in Bethany be called of Magdala? But I would not rashly upset a popular belief which procures a certain measure of pity, a glimmering of hope, for a most unhappy class of beings. According to legendary history, Mary Magdalene, with Martha, Lazarus, and many saints besides, left Judæa, and arrived by sea at Marseilles, where they made many converts; so that Mary, to avoid the press, withdrew, first to a grotto in the rock whereon stood the Abbey of St. Victor, then to Aygadales, where was founded a monastery of Carmes, and finally to St. Beaume, where she ended her

days. Her first retreat was dedicated as a chapel to Notre Dame de la Confession ; yet, though it might seem appropriated to the sex, by the inhabitation of one female saint, and the protection of the very sanctity of womanhood, no woman might enter therein under pain of blindness. Queen Joan (of Naples, I presume) was thus punished for her temerity, but recovered her sight by putting a silver balustrade round the image of the Virgin. The Beaume is a romantic and interesting spot, visited, even in modern times, by pilgrims, but with other feelings than of old.

NUMBER.

I NEVER censure occult or abstruse learning when applied to matters of avowed mystery. It is mystification, not mystery, that I protest against. The secret significances of numbers, as well as the language of jewels, and the hieroglyphic import of animals, should be devoutly studied by a commentator on the Apocalypse, or Daniel, or Ezekiel, or Zechariah. I suspect that the true prophetic key once existed, but is lost, and may not be found till all is fulfilled.

OPPOSITION.

"*Oppositions of science, falsely so called, are the erroneous principles of Heathen philosophy.*"

THAT NO allusion whatever is made to heathen philosophy, I think pretty evident. I suspect the word *αντίθεσις* has a technical meaning, and refers to those vain antithetical distinctions and new-fangled terminology, *βεβήλους κενοφωνίας* (*βεβήλους*, perhaps, as being borrowed from the heathen), under which the nascent heresies already disguised their unwillingness to submit to the austere simplicity of the Gospel,—thus, dividing and opposing Jesus and Christ, the Son of Mary and the Son of God, &c. Science is not a good rendering of *γνώσις*, which evidently refers to the Gnostics, who sought for an esoteric Christianity.

ORACLES.

"The Heathen oracles were partly the illusions of Satan. He, in the likeness of Samuel, predicted that, on the morrow, Saul and his sons should be with him." (*1st Samuel*, xxviii.)

SURELY this is not said in Scripture. Yet I would rather believe it were so than that Satan had power to disturb the just that sleep in the Lord. But this narrative admits an easy explanation, without taking a greater liberty with the latter than is here supposed. A learned collection, and philosophical examination, of extra-scriptural oracles and

predictions is a great desideratum, but hardly to be expected from this age, when one party pique themselves on walking by sight, and another think that an indiscriminate credulity is walking by faith.

PALM TREES.

THE white willow, with its honied yellow blossoms, so musical with bees, is in the north of England called the palm. I have seen its branches carried on Palm Sunday, in honour of our Saviour's entrance into Jerusalem, a remnant of Catholic times I would gladly see preserved. Many, I doubt not, actually thought that these were the palms of Scripture; but I am afraid there are no palms of any sort this year in Westmoreland for boys or bees, this present Palm Sunday, 1845 (March 16), Easter being portentously early, and spring remarkably late. Yet snow has fallen ere now on a later Palm Sunday; witness that bloody day of Towton, March 29, O.S., 1461, when the snowfall blinded the Lancastrians at the onset, and betrayed their flight by bloody stains. Thus did the men of old keep the sabbath. Thus did they celebrate the day when our Lord entered Jerusalem, meek, and riding upon an ass, the beast of peace and industry, by that symbolic act proclaiming himself the Prince of Peace, and disclaiming the Messiahship of Israel's blind imagination. It is some comfort, however, that no one calls the wars of the roses holy.

RAHAB.

"The spies might not know her character when they took up their lodging, and she was mightily reformed before Salmon married her," &c.

SCRIPTURE says nothing, that I know, about her reformation. And how came Salmon to marry a Canaanitish woman? This was against the letter of the law. Rahab was both an innkeeper and a harlot: her dwelling upon the wall was much the same as was assigned to her profession both in ancient and modern times, and her concealing the spies would have been of no use if she had not told the lie, and James expressly commends her for it. "Likewise was not Rahab, the harlot, justified by works, when she received the messengers, and sent them out by another way." He who commends an act which could only be effected by certain means, commends, or at least approves, the means. James seems to have written with the Epistle to the Hebrews before him. But the Lord commended the unjust steward, and all the commendation which either Paul or James bestows upon Rahab, is of the same kind. Paul cites her as an example of faith; not of divine or Christian faith, but simply as a person who, by giving credence to a certain testimony, had attained the reward she sought,—her personal security. James guards against a misapplication of Paul's simile (for in truth it is nothing more), by explaining, that had not her faith produced an act, it would not have availed her. Without faith the

act would never have been done. There is no contradiction between the Apostles, but a strong mutual confirmation. The argument may be expanded thus :—Rahab, a sinful inhabitant of a city divinely doomed to destruction, believed the report of the spies, and acting in conformity to that belief, escaped the temporal destruction which befell her townsmen. So shall ye, if ye believe the messenger of the Lord, sent to warn you of the spiritual judgment impending over your Jericho, the sinful world, and act in the spirit of that belief, be spared in the day of visitation. The events of the Old Testament are cited by the Apostles, not as cases or instances of Christian faith and practice, but only as types or analogies; and analogies, too, which are not to be conjugated through all moods and tenses, but confined strictly to the purpose directly in view. St. Paul in the Hebrews is speaking of the power of faith, not of the character of those by whom it was exercised, or the objects for which they exercised it. I do not find that the marriage of Salmon and Rahab is anywhere mentioned in the Old Testament, but it is said in Joshua that she dwelleth in Israel to this day, which I should be disposed to interpret of her descendants.

RUBY.

"The original word *Peninim* is thought by some to signify pearls." (*Job*, xxviii. 18.)

PARKHURST, following Hutchinson, inclines to think that *peninim* are magnets or loadstones, for no reason that appears, except the resemblance of the word to the root ΠΑΝΑΗ, στρέφειν, to turn, from which, with equal probability, he derived the Latin *pœnitet*. Why not the English *pun*, which certainly turns the sense of words inside out? Pan, for pancakes require to be turned nicely? Pain, which makes one turn in bed? The Latin *panes*, because Alfred was scolded for not turning the cakes? On grounds of like validity, he concludes that some of the ancient nations, particularly the Jews, Phœnicians, and Arabians, to whom we may add the Phœacians and Chinese, were acquainted with the polarity of the magnet, and with its use in navigation. That it was known to the Chinese before the celestial empire became renowned in Europe for tea and tea-pots is generally allowed. That it might be known to the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, amid the wreck of Punic art and literature, it would be rash to deny. The length of their rumoured voyages, and their discoveries in the obscure regions of the north, dispose me to think that they had some guide less prone to hiding than the heavenly bodies. What the Phœnicians knew the Jews might know. Solomon would spare no expense to obtain the secret. But I can find no allusion in the English Bible

to a phenomenon so remarkable, and so pregnant in similes and analogies. There is no knowing what the Hutchinsonians might find in the Hebrew. But Parkhurst, who enumerates all the passages in which the word *peninim* occurs (Job, xxviii. 18; Proverbs, iii. 15; viii. 11—25; xxxi. 10; Lament., iv. 7), though he says that considerable light is thrown on these texts by the supposition that the Hebrews knew the virtues of the magnet, has not suffered one ray to beam from his pages. The Phæacian knowledge of the use of the magnet in navigation is surmised from the *Odyssey*, viii. 556, κ. τ. λ., where Alcinous talks of rational ships that know their master's minds, and are well versed in geography:—

Πάντων ἴσασι πόλεας καὶ πίονας ἄγρους
Ἀνθρώπων.

I think the lines that follow go much nearer to prove that the Phæacians had steamers:—

λαῖτμα τάχισθ' ἄλδς εκπεροώσιν
Ἡέρι καὶ νεφελῇ κεκαλυμμένοι.

I wonder the pious lexicographer did not ascribe a compass to the Argonauts. What else could he mean by the oracular prow? In all the texts wherein *peninim* is found, except the last (Lament., iv. 7), it is merely used as a measure of comparison to exalt the value either of wisdom or of woman. In Lamentations the context seems strong in favour of the English translation. The Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk; they were more ruddy in body than *rubies*. But Parkhurst makes this very

passage support Hutchinson's hypothesis by the aid of the learned Costard's (*vide* Miss Hawkins's Anecdotes, or the opium-eater's review thereof, in the *Lond. Mag.*, March, 1823) "History of Astronomy," which says that the first and best sort of loadstone from China and Bengal is of an iron, or bloody colour, and that there is another sort found in Arabia, and in the Red Sea, like a tile of a reddish colour. Anybody may be convinced by these arguments that chooses. Bochart, in an elaborate dissertation, maintains that *peninim* signify pearls, but I cannot refer to the work at present. If he founds his judgment on the word *πίσσα* (*pinna*, a pearl-oyster), it is nearer in value to a pin than a pearl.

SAMARITANS.

FROM recent accounts, it appears that the Samaritans are dwindled to a mere handful, not more than thirty heads of families paying taxes, and few or none are exempt. In general they are in middling circumstances. One affluent individual, named El Abdes Samary (so not Samary Samaritan), was lately secretary to the Mutesellim of Nabulus (no doubt Naplouse, or Shechem), but now superseded by a Copt. The modern Samaritan physiognomy is not Jewish, and they repay the antipathy of Judah with interest. They observe the sabbath strictly, possess the books of the law, but read them on festivals only. Four times in the year they have a solemn assembly and procession

to Mount Gerizim, now called Jebel el Tur. Nothing is said by my authority as to their priesthood. They are, like the Jews and Gypsies, an affecting relic of antiquity. I cannot but wish that the conversion of all three might take place without destroying their nationality; that the gypsies could be allowed to continue sons of Jabal, and that the Jews, restored to the land of their fathers, might resume their agricultural and pastoral life, and all of their law that is not bloody; might be clothed after the fashion of their patriarchs,—their old men as Abraham, and their young men as David, when he fed sheep in the wilderness; their aged dames as Anna the prophetess, and their young matrons like Ruth or Hannah; and their fair virgins like Jephtha's daughter. Their original feasts, the Passover (in a Christian sense), the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of Harvest, and the feast of In-gathering, which is at the end of the year, should remain. And let them keep Christmas too, but not the feast of Expiation; or look for atonement or purification save in the blood of the Lamb. Neither let them keep the feast of Purim, which was of no divine appointment, only commemorated crime and massacre, and kept alive their national hatred, which had no place in the worship of HIM who died for all mankind. But, above all, let them not forget the year of Jubilee, which proclaims their God a God of liberty. May they sit every man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, and may there be no king in Israel but the Son of David, whom their fathers crucified!

SHIPHRA AND PUAH.

"They (Shiphra and Puah) told him that the Hebrew Women were not like the Egyptians, but could, and oft did, bring forth their infants without help of midwives. Possibly there might be a great deal of truth in this; but whatever falsehood was in their speech, God did not reward it, but He rewarded their fear of Him, and their love to the Hebrews."

IT is strange that holy men like the minister of Haddington cannot perceive that this quibbling method of interpreting Scripture is much worse falsehood than that of Shiphra and Puah could be. True, God did not reward their falsehood simply as falsehood; neither did he reward the Levites who massacred the calf-worshippers, or Phinehas, when he pinned Zimri and Cosbi together with his spear, for the mere act of homicide. But he rewarded the zeal displayed in the one case by falsehood, and in the other by bloodshed. Truth to tyrants, mercy to idolators or fornicators, were not then understood as duties; and God judges only according to the light and law that he has given. I think, however, that the midwives were absolutely justifiable. To a tyrant, or a murderer seeking innocent blood, truth is not due.

TAMMUZ, OR THAMMUZ.

"It is said he was either Thamus, an ancient King of Upper Egypt, or was Adonis the Son of Cyniras, an Assyrian, who founded the city of Paphos in Cyprus, by his own daughter Myrrha."

How different a creature is a poet from a Puritan!
Milton was as fierce an iconoclast as Mr. Brown

himself, yet how tenderly does he record the delusion of the Syrian damsels.* The transformation of the Syrian god into a smock-faced stripling of Cyprus is a fair instance of the Greek tendency to Hellenise and beautify the oriental legends. How would a worshipper of Thammuz have marvelled to recognise in Shakspeare's pretty insensible his own most dreaded deity? Adonis reminds the ear of Adona. But far more important and remarkable is the wide-spread belief in the death and resurrection of gods and heroes, which in some form or other occurs in almost every system of idolatry. Is this to be ascribed to a prophecy coeval, it may be, with the fall, variously disguised, disfigured and corrupted by time and craft and ignorance, but never wholly forgotten? or is it a prophetic yearning of the great spirit of the world dreaming of things to come, an oracular utterance of the human heart which the heathen misinterpreted according to their own fancies. I believe that both the hypotheses are in some measure true, but maintain with far greater confidence that the All-Wise and All-Good has at all times and in all places preserved in the very errors and madness of mankind a type and testimony of the truth that is in Christ. I am aware that there are *εὐνπνιαζόμενοι* who explain all these deaths and resurrections (and well were it if they stopped there) of the retirement of the sun to the southern solstice, the decay and revival of vegetation, the changes of the moon and other natural phenomena, which certainly are not

* "The Love Tale," &c.—*Paradise Lost*, Book 1.

without celebration among the Gentiles, but originally as symbols of something above and beyond them.

TYRE.

THE governor of Tyre has been committing excesses upon Christian woman (before last May, 1841). Their ruin and prophetically denounced judgments do not appear to have improved Tyrian morals. Their purple is become a theme for Pancirollus. The precious shell yields the imperial tint no more, but the sins of Tyre are as scarlet still.

Colonel Anderson, with the British sappers, artillery, &c., on Mount Carmel! How strange it seems to think of an English colonel on the very spot where, nigh 3000 years ago, Elijah confounded and extirpated the 450 priests of Baal, with engines, too, the fire of which had appeared to the idolators of Israel not less miraculous than that which licked up the water in the trenches around the Tishbite's altar! The sappers, though perhaps not over well shod, will not turn Carmelite friars. And Colonel Macniven at Nablous, the ancient Shechem, the Sychar of the Samaritans, where the Saviour conversed with the spouse of five! There is something puzzling to me, well as I know its certainty, in the actual geographical existence of the scenes of the Old Testament events, for I have no such feeling in respect to the New. I am apt to think of the Holy Land as of the paradise of Izem, and I would as

soon seek in Billedulgerid for the Garden of the Hesperides, as for Naboth's vineyard in the pachalic of Syria. This is a mere crotchet of the imagination. My faith is perfectly historical.

EXTRACTS FROM NOTE BOOKS.*

ASSERTION OF LUTHER RESPECTING GOD.

Gott kan nicht Gott seyn er muß zu vorn ein Teuffel werden.
—LUTHER, tom. 5.

I QUOTE at second-hand from Sculteti Ethica ; but I suppose the passage is to be found in the German Boanerges, and startling as the expression seems,—The God we worship, with his attributes of holiness, justice, and mercy, in His characters of Judge, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Law-giver, could be conceived only by the antithesis or antagonism of an actual or possible evil principle. Analogically, we might say that were there no fear, there could be no such virtue as valour ; if no sensuality, no temperance or chastity, and so forth. As I am not acquainted with the context, I cannot tell what provoked Luther to such an astounding way of expressing a very demonstrable truth ; but Martin was one of those who delight in putting their doctrines into the form most likely to puzzle and alarm the common-sense of simple persons,

* The following extracts turn, more or less closely, upon the subject of religion, and may be read in connexion with the Notes immediately preceding.

like the worthy Unitarian parson who commenced a sermon on the Divine Omnipresence with "God is in Hell." After all, there is an equivocation in Luther's proposition, inasmuch as it confounds the absolute eternal self-existent and self-sufficing One with Jehovah, the Lord, the revealed and substantiated Personality, the Θεός ἀτοκάθαντος with Emmanuel, the God with us. More truly might he have said: Were there no Devil, there would be nothing but God; nothing antithetic to, or distinguishable from God. God would be, as He promises to be when Sin is destroyed, All, and All in All.

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ON THE VIRGIN MARY.

"But Mary kept all these sayings in her heart."

A VERY serious question is suggested by these words. Was Mary aware of her child's divinity? Probably not. That her offspring was the Child of Promise, the Hope of Israel, she always believed, and sometimes *knew*; but that He was the Lord Jehovah, perhaps was only revealed to her after his glorification. There is little, very little about Mary in the Christian Scriptures. That she was always a virgin is, I believe, the orthodox opinion of the Church of England; yet a mau might maintain her to have been *bonâ fide* the wife of Joseph without rejecting or explaining away a single text. Indeed it requires a very latitudinarian exposition to support the doctrine of her perpetual virginity. Thus, Matthew i., 24, 25:

“Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and KNEW HER NOT TILL she had brought forth her first-born son,” ἔως δ’ἔτεκε. Now certainly these words do not necessarily imply that Joseph ever did know her, were there any text implying that he did not; no one could convict the Evangelist of self-contradiction upon the strength of ἔως οὖν; and all the parallel passages which Beza adduces *contra Helvidianos* (who were they?) are quite supererogatory. But still, as there is no sure text,—as Mary is never styled the Virgin in any of the few passages in which she is mentioned in the Gospels or Acts; no one can say that the perpetual virginity of Mary rests upon Bible authority. The same line of argument applies to the passages which speak of our Lord’s brethren, who we are to believe were his cousins only. I do believe it; I would rather believe them anything than that they who scoffed at Jesus ever lay in the same womb where he had lain. Nor can I conceive it possible that she whom the Holy Ghost had overshadowed, whose issue was called the Son of God, would be mother to a mere fleshly progeny; or that any man, far less a pious man like Joseph, would dare to approach a woman whom he knew by divine communication to have conceived by the Holy Ghost. If the men of Bethshemesh, who but looked into the typical ark, were smitten, even fifty thousand and three-score and three men, how could Joseph have ventured to touch that sacred ark in which God really dwelt, and perish not? Perhaps some one

may object that the old ark, deserted of Divinity, would only have been a gilt cabinet, and that Mary, delivered of Jesus, was only a woman. I anticipate such scoffing objections, only to show how little I fear them, and how easily they are answered. No doubt, the brazen serpent which Moses erected in the wilderness, the emblem of our crucified Saviour, its purpose done, was nothing but so much copper; and Hezekiah is seemingly commended for breaking it to pieces when it became an idol. Balaam's ass, when its miraculous voice was mute, was nothing more than any other ass. But Mary was a woman, capable of and participant of holiness, which wood, or copper, or mere animal life, could not be. In fine, my opinion in this case, as in many others, is the orthodox and catholic opinion, though I defy the most orthodox Oxoniensis to dig it out of the mere words of Scripture. We must bring something to the Bible, as to the study of nature, or we shall carry nothing valuable away; and they who think that I disparage the Bible by this, might as well say that I disparage nature.

Why was I led away into this unquiet path of controversy, when I meant only to certify my inward conviction that miracles, even to those who have beheld or experienced them, can never be more than subjective evidence. Mary who had borne Jesus by a more than miracle, was yet only a *believer* in Him. She treasured His sayings in her heart as so many confirmations of a prophecy. She had a wishing, hoping, praying, doubting, not an assured belief in

the Messiahship of her own supernatural child. Did He not rebuke her impatience at the marriage at Cana of Galilee?*

How far Jesus was conscious of His own Divinity in His infancy, or whether there were any struggles between His Divinity and His humanity, except in the

* The following beautiful stanzas—alas! unfinished—may be preserved here in illustration of the above passage :—

LINES TO THE VIRGIN MARY.

Ave Maria! so for many an age,
At stated hour, the universal voice
Of boy and girl, of nimble-witted page,
Of lord and serf and motley fool and sage,
Of all that mourned, and all that could rejoice
In the blithe prospect of the coming day :—
All knelt together, and together prayed,
And never thought it toil or task to pray
For intercession of the Mother Maid.

Ave Maria! may we not adore
The Virgin Mother, the sweet maid appointed
To be the mother of the Babe Anointed?
And is it truly sin to bow before
The most immaculate form of womanhood,
The second and the better Eve,
Before all time predestined to conceive
The only man that could
Be wholly good?

Ah! lovely maiden! 'twas enough for thee
To be the mother of thine own great Saviour,—
To hold the little Jesus on thy knee,
And ponder o'er the childish sweet behaviour
Of that young Holy One. Ah! didst thou know
All that He was, and was to undergo?
Didst thou, indeed, when on thy breast He hung,
Behold Him hanging on the cursed tree?
Or didst thou think the pretty babe that clung
To thee so close was very Deity?

Ave Maria! nothing that hath been
Can cease to be,—no act of God is past!
So art thou still the Maiden Mother Queen,
And Jesus is thy babe from first to last!
Yet do they wrong thee who believe that thou
Art pleased with human misdirected prayer.

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temptation in the wilderness, and the agony in the garden, are questions hidden till the last day. Only I conjecture that the words of Luke, iv. 13, "he departed from Him for a season," may be explained of that fearful temptation which Jesus vanquished with "Lord, not my will, but thine, be done."

Every part of our Lord's life which the Spirit has recorded is a mystery, from the Annunciation to the Resurrection. But by a mystery I do not mean a rhapsody of words; a strange entanglement of lines, colours, &c.; a numerical puzzle, or a mandate to believe what, not knowing, we cannot know whether we truly believe or not; but an eternal, infinite, and therefore incomprehensible truth, vital and operative in, but not limited to, or circumscribed by, a definite act or form. Thus the law, both ceremonial and moral, was a mystery; it always meant something more than itself, but with this distinction: the moral law meant itself, and something more; the ceremonial law has no meaning except as a mystery. ("It is impossible that the blood of bulls or of goats should cleanse away sin.") The municipal or merely Jewish law was no mystery; it meant nothing but itself, and has no more to do with Christianity than the laws of Charondas the Locrian.

Every act of our Lord's life was a mystery, but not so every act of the Jewish people. I detest the practice of mysticising the Old Testament events. It is good for every Christian to observe how the Almighty prepared all things for the advent of the Only-begotten; how each successive arrangement

prophesied Christianity—as the blade, the stalk, the ear all foretell the perfect grain. But further than this we should not go, at least as English Christians. If a Jew can find Christianity in the political history of his ancestors, well and good; better than not to find it at all.

ON THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN FRANCE.

RELIGION, such as it is, seems to be reviving in France. Images and hosts are carried in procession, as in the days of St. Louis and of Louis le Grand; and the Protestants of the Aveyron are knocked down if they do not kneel before them. The Fête Dieu has this year been celebrated with the accustomed solemnities. At Toulon the guns were fired, as in the time of Charles X.; and at Aix, in the Pas de Calais, a fair damsel of seventeen, of a highly respectable family, walked in the procession, Sunday, June 5, in the character of the Virgin. According to my authority, she was so tired of her virginity, that in the evening she eloped with an officer of cuirassiers. That, however, looks very like a lie. What does all this betoken? Is there a real reaction? Are the French, or any portion of them, about to revolve from infidelity to fanaticism, as the English at the Restoration revolved from puritanism to latitudinarianism? Are the catholic ants recovering from their stupor, and beginning to gather up the fragments of their nests, which were blown up at the

Revolution? Have the devotees returned like swallows from their long migration, or crept out of their holes like worms after a thunder-storm? Or is the Citizen King persuaded that every monarchy, however attained, requires the unction of some church to give it stability?—an idea he may have borrowed from Napoleon. Or have the weight of empire and the sense of insecurity rendered him sincerely superstitious? I think the last supposition as probable as any; though very likely all the conjectured occasions, and many more, may be co-operant. Despots are generally superstitious in some form or other. Even Bonaparte had his star. Possibly there was an infatuation of enthusiasm, as well as of vanity, in Alexander's pretence to a divine origin, and assumption of divine honours. The most profligate and sensual tyrants, as Louis XI., Louis XIV., and Louis XV., have been the slaves of supernatural terrors, and endeavoured to curry favour with Heaven by abject mummeries and persecuting cruelty; for superstition makes no man better; never leads to real contrition, or a true sense of sin; never brings the sinner to the Saviour. It ascribes a saving might to the chips of the cross, but it never acknowledges the true and all-sufficient sacrifice. Caligula and the stronger-minded Tiberius, amid their impiety, were afflicted with dread of the unseen powers. Nero and Helio-gabalus tampered with magic. Some drunken crowned heads, as our King John and William Rufus, may have affected a braggart contempt of all religion; but I believe Frederic XV. of Hohenstauffen, and his

namesake of Prussia, are almost the only infidel philosophers among monarchs. The *contemptor deum Mezentius* will oftener be found in the soldier's hut than in the royal pavilion ; and the reason is obvious. Men in ordinary stations are controlled by their fellow men, baffled or assisted by trivial circumstances, and the sphere of their free agency is so circumscribed, that they can easily discern and calculate the effects of their own actions. They are like those light substances upon which the laws of attraction and repulsion have scarcely any perceptible influence. They see the hand that checks or leads them ; the circumstances that surround them seem mere casualties, and therefore, if not truly religious, they ascribe all to human power or to chance. But it is otherwise with the rulers of mankind. They cannot but feel that the power which they seem to wield is something external to themselves. They are like the planets, which while they are deemed by some the arbiters of destiny, are in fact blind, helpless masses, with less of self-determining energy than the leaf that trembles in the breeze. Then the accidents of their public existence are huge and imposing ; and upon the same principle that makes folks who see nothing but chance or nature in a common shower of rain, ascribe the thunder, the eclipse, the earthquake to an offended Deity, the accident which affects an empire is deemed an accident no longer. If the piety be wanting to refer it to the One All-wise, superstition will attribute it to a fate, a dæmon, or, perhaps, to a charm. Kings are oftener reminded

of the impotence of human might than their subjects of the middle class, whose affairs are more manageable, and hence feel more need of supernatural aid; and, above all, absolute kings are beset with continual danger; they have no confidence in men, and least of all in themselves. Their very boasting is but a mock courage, designed to conceal their weakness, if possible, from themselves. Hence, if they have not the wisdom, the virtue, or the knowledge to rely on the Rock of Ages, they build themselves forts and towers on foundations of sand, processions, relics, purchased or commanded prayers, good works that are not good because selfish, astrological predictions, false promises of wizards, drunken prophecies, omens, and dreams. All men are apt to be superstitious whose hopes are placed in contingencies the issues of which are incalculable. Gamesters are superstitious; so are ignorant miners and sailors. Who ever disregarded omens when he was in love? But to return to the religious symptoms of France. I know not whether our gay neighbours are to be congratulated on these re-appearances or not. Any measure of true religion, though alloyed with much superstition, is incomparably better than mere negation and unbelief; but a religion which is nothing but superstition, and that superstition little more than pageantry and légerdemain, though it may serve the purposes of a state, is for the individual worse than a calm rationalism, or a good-natured naturalism. But the important question is, which affords the best prospect of the reception of pure Christianity? And this

question I am not at present prepared to answer. Undoubtedly, a truth-loving sceptic will be more easily converted than a bigoted papist or idolater; but there is a wide difference between the scepticism which proceeds from a passion for truth, albeit misdirected or even presumptuous,—the doubt which may be a stage in the development of faith,—and the infidelity which is a fashion, a party bond, a fanaticism. But I apprehend that the principal cause that true Christianity is little believed in France is, that it is little known; that since the suppression of the Jansenists, themselves replete with error, and not free from suspicion of pious fraud, the Gospel has been almost obsolete; for the French Protestants. I fear, are, and long have been, a weak cattle, differing from the laxest English Socinians only for the worse. Indeed, in a country where the Bible was not in the hands of the people, the loathsome *pot pourri** of cruelty, sensuality, and devotion, compounded by Louis Quatorze and his successor, was enough to disgust the nation with the very name of religion, even if Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, and the rest of that set, had never lived. I have often wondered that while missions are sent to the remotest savages, a kingdom not less in need of Christian instruction, much better prepared for it, and whose irreligion acts perilously upon the English themselves, has not engaged the attention of our missionary societies. But it is not too late. Only the teachers must be content to preach the pure Christianity of St. Paul

* Substituted for the original word, which is illegible.—D. C.

and of St. John. They must not meddle at all with politics, nor unnecessarily with manners, fashions, or philosophy. Our missionaries, both at home and abroad, injure their divine cause perpetually by their prying, meddling, busy-bodyism, and their extreme anxiety (a true English infirmity) to form sects and societies. They cannot be content to form hearts and minds, and leave the rest to Providence.

When the above was written, I was not aware that missionaries were at work in France, not without success, if the Wesleyan journals may be trusted. But I am afraid there is more English religion lost across the Channel than the French converts as yet will replace.

ON PARISH CLERKS, AND PARISH VESTRIES.

I MAINTAIN that no person should be allowed to execute any office in Church or State by proxy, except in the case of temporary disability or necessary absence. If any official be permanently disabled, let him be well-provided for by a retiring pension, if he deserve it, and let another be appointed in his room. If the business of the place be such as a gentleman cannot execute without loss of caste, a gentleman should not accept it, nor, indeed, should he have the opportunity of refusing. Let me not be misunderstood. There are divers offices whose proper duty is merely superintendence,—the actual business of which is fitly committed to operative hands. No

one will suppose that I intend that an architect should mix mortar or handle the trowel. Other offices there are, merely honorary, as, for example, the Lords of the Bed Chamber, and others, once efficient, whose occupation is gone by the change of time. The propriety of retaining these in the State, is no part of our present enquiry. In the Church, I am confident that no such offices ought to exist. But whatever be the duty of an active office, whether superintendence or personal labour, it should be performed personally and not by deputy.

The interests of the Church imperiously demand that the duties of the clerk should always be performed, not, indeed, by a clergyman, but by a person of respectability and education. The place is too often conferred, I fear, from motives of favour or mistaken charity, or more mistaken economy; with little regard to character and none at all to acquirement, beyond the simple capacity to read, write, and set a psalm, on individuals who have no better claims than having been old servants, or having large families, or being like to be burdensome to the parish. How often, in town and country, do we hear and see our divine Liturgy rendered absolutely ludicrous by all imaginable tones, twangs, drawls, mouthings, wheezings, gruntings, snuffles, and quid-rollings, by all diversities of dialects, cacologies, and cacophonies, by twistings, contortions, and consolidations of visage, squintings, and blinkings, and upcastings of eyes, which remind one more of Punch than of any animated comedian; and where the schoolmaster has

been abroad, we are not seldom nauseated by conceited airs and prim grimaces, and pronouncing-dictionary affectations, that make us heartily wish for the old grotesques again. Then, too, the discretion assumed by these Hogarthic studies, of selecting the tunes and the verses to be sung, makes the Psalmody, instead of an integral and affecting portion of the Service, as distracting and irrelevant an episode as the jigs and country-dances scraped between the acts of a tragedy. These selections of four stanzas out of a long psalm, cut off from all connection and signification, are, at best, unmeaning; but they very frequently are made to allude slyly to the politics of the day or the scandal of the village, and so, if they do not produce a universal titter, or a downright commotion, give rise to infinite shuffling, whispering, knowing looks, smiles, and frowns, and a train of thoughts and feelings very unfit for the place and occasion.

There would be no difficulty in getting properly qualified persons to perform all the religious duties of a parish clerk for small remuneration, or none, were it not for the troublesome and often disagreeable parish business annexed to the office. And this brings me to the most important consideration arising from the incident upon which I have been commenting.* Why is it that radical or schismatic vestries are allowed to insult and tyrannise over clergy and congregations? To starve and denude the church? Why are such wild boars permitted to

* It is not necessary to record the actual occurrence.

lay waste the Lord's vineyard? For what cause, on what pretence, are they suffered to defile the sanctuary? Clearly because the Church is tethered to the State; because ecclesiastical discipline has been jumbled together with civil law; because the worship of the Almighty has been intricated with parish business, with rates, and cesses, and marriage licenses, and registrations, with bastardy and bigamy, with wills and probates of wills, and a hundred things besides, that have no more to do with religion than the price of stocks has to do with the precession of the equinoxes. Because the tables of the money-changers have been set up in the court of the temple. If the Church will legislate for the world, the world will and is entitled to legislate for the Church. The griping ambition of the Romish clergy, aided by their monopoly of learning, laid hold on all manner of secular matters, and brought them under the dominion of the Church; and now the secular is grown too strong for the spiritual, and will sink it to earth unless the spirit resolutely break away and throw off the incongruous mixture. The children of Israel cannot rule in Egypt; they must fly from it, and be free; or remain in it, and be slaves. In a word, the first step towards a resurrection of the Church must be to disentangle her from all secular business whatever, and leave her enemies no pretence for intermeddling with her holy interests. All men, whether saints or sinners, have an undoubted right to a voice in the regulation of their own worldly affairs, but those worldly affairs should not be submitted to a vestry.

Romanists or Socinians ought not to legislate for the Church of England, but they ought to have a share in legislating for themselves. Let the Church therefore retain nothing which Romanist or Socinian can claim; nothing which the State can cry halves in; then let the Church govern herself by the laws of Christ and the rules of Christian expediency, and submit to no secular legislation whatever.

ON PROFANENESS.

“To a thorough Papist,” says Philagathus,* “nothing is too profane.” Perhaps not: but is it always just to predicate profaneness of every allusion that does not tally with our notions of formal reverence? “Marry come up,” saith Mrs. Slipslop—“people’s ears are sometimes the nicest parts about them!” She might have added, the most religious part also. Surely it is as perverse and uncandid to designate the familiar terms in which our ancestors conversed of spiritual natures, profaneness, as to call their plain-speaking, on certain other topics, obscenity. This familiarity, and seeming levity, was the natural effect of a palpable, matter-of-fact, objective faith, and our circuitous, periphrastic fashion of hinting at holy things, only bewrays the conscious hollowness of our creed. It is the painted cheek that fears the rain. We talk of all that concerns our immortal souls as mincingly as of our unseemliest corporal

* Robert Southey—well described as the *lover* of good.

infirmities. It is *mauvais ton* at best, to speak of either in terms which convey any image, form, feeling, or sense of reality. Hence, the polite world have no other conception of spiritual essence or influence, but that the one is not body, the other is not sensation; therefore neither, according to their sum of experience, is anything. They are the Nominalists of negative Christianity. Hence knowing, in spite of themselves, that their religion is a bubble, that will break at the contact of any solid substance, however slight, they have a nervous apprehension of all associations that savour of the reality—of whatever may provoke a comparison between the sensuous objects which they do believe, and the spiritual truths which they dare not quite disbelieve. There is little distinction with these dainty people, whether the homely household things are approximated to the Holy One, to derive sanctity, or to communicate vileness. It is their piety to keep religion altogether aloof from the business, the duties, the ingoings, or outgoings of life. God must have nothing to do with “familiar matter of to-day.” If His operation is to be recognised at all, it must be in connection with something very far off, or very long ago; as old as the Creation, or as distant as the fixed stars. The *Ens Entium* with them is much too great and refined a personage to trouble himself about particulars. He may have condescended to make a few worlds; but it is highly derogatory to His dignity to suppose that He troubles himself about the creatures upon them, unless, indeed, it be

to keep the several species from extinction. They cannot conceive Him stooping to the little disgusting items that make up the sum of human existence. Having adopted a false and aristocratic notion of the dignity of man, they transfer the same artificial and exclusive dignity to the Supreme; and think it as unfit for the Deity to meddle with the pursuits or passions of mortals, as for a gentleman to make himself a party in the quarrels or amours of his servants' hall.

It was otherwise with our ancestors, with the adherents of the ancient Church, and with the first-born of the Reformation. They recognised God in everything; their Father in heaven was to them as real, as vital, as seeing, hearing, loving, and chastising a person as their fathers on earth. They spoke of Him on all occasions, and in connection with all things; and it must be confessed, in their simplicity, they often hazarded associations which had better have been avoided; and engaged the Almighty in occupations very unsuitable to His pure and awful idea. But this was not profaneness; it was only bad taste.

ON INDULGENCES.

MAC,* like Luther, makes his first attack on the indulgences, and he is right; for although there may have been other errors and abuses as pernicious, there was nothing in the unreformed Church at once so mean and so presumptuous as this huckstering of

* The Editor of "The Protestant," a Scotch publication.

salvation. With the old Romans it was a reproach *cauponare bellum*; much worse is it *cauponare veritatem*; but *cauponare salutem* is worst of all. Suppose the indulgences to have been given and not sold,—suppose them given on conditions of reformation, good life, &c., and that they had pretended to no more than to supply the inevitable deficiencies of human performance, they would have been less shabby, and perhaps, in a temporal sense, less mischievous; but still they would have implied the three fundamental fallacies of Romanism. First, that man can do more than his duty, and thereby acquire a supererogatory merit; secondly, that human gifts or graces can be imputed or rendered beneficial to any other than the possessor, otherwise than by direct actual communication; or, to speak more plainly, that there can be any other vicarious holiness than that of Christ; third, that the Pope, or the Catholic Church, or any assembly of men existing at any given time, and being or assuming to be a visible Church, or rulers of such Church, can mediately or immediately of their own act and will, or by any *opus operatum*, influence the spiritual condition of any human creature in relation to God, and his own salvation. These doctrines I hold to constitute the sin and the danger of the Roman creed. Compared to these, transubstantiation, the seven sacraments, auricular confession, purgatory, invocation of saints, salutation of images, consecration of relics, the Papal claim to universal dominion, nay, inquisitorial persecution itself, I maintain to be but as small dust

in the balance, any further than as they are like the rooted pillars of the banian, at once suckers and supporters of that mystery of iniquity, which interposes the priest between the sinner and the Saviour.

Hume asserts that the indulgences did not free their purchasers from hell fire. The following is given in the "Protestant," as the form of the indulgence preached by Tetzel :—

"May the Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and absolve thee by His most holy Passion, and by His authority, and that of His Holy Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, and of the most Holy Pope, granted and committed to me in these parts, I absolve thee, first, from all ecclesiastical censures in whatever manner they may have been incurred, and then from all thy sins, how many soever they may be, even from such as are reserved for the cognisance of the Holy See ; and as far as the keys of the Holy Church extend I remit to you all punishment in Purgatory on their account, and I restore you to the Holy Sacraments of the Church, to the Unity of the Faithful, and to that purity which you possessed at Baptism, that when you die the Gates of Hell shall be shut, and the Gates of Paradise shall be opened ; and if you shall not die at present, this Grace shall remain in full force when you are at the point of death. In nomine, &c."

Indulgences, it would seem, are not out of fashion yet, at least were not in the Pontificate of Pius VII. The following is the letter of indulgence dispatched by His Holiness to Cork :—

“Pius VII., by Divine Providence, Pope, grants unto each and all of the Faithful in Jesus Christ, who after assisting at least eight times at the holy exercise of the mission, at the new Cathedral of Cork, shall confess his or her sins with true contrition, and approach unto the Holy Communion, shall devoutly visit the said Cathedral, and then offer up to God for some time pious and fervent prayers for the propagation of the Gospel, according to Catholic Faith, and to the intention of our Holy Father, a plenary indulgence applicable to souls in Purgatory by way of suffrage, and this by way of jubilee.”

But it is plain enough how low the Seven Hills are sunk, from the vague terms of this indulgence, compared to the dauntless accuracy of the other.

THE CASA SANCTA AT LORETTO.

Who has not heard of the Sancta Casa of Loretto, a lie of such consummate audacity that one is almost frightened into believing it? Had such a miracle been dated within the period to which the Protestants confine their belief of miracles, how triumphantly would the “Christian Advocate” have asserted the impossibility of such a tale being invented, since, if it were not true, thousands must have been witness to its falsehood! Alas! there are times when men dare neither see what they see, nor not see what is not to be seen, but at the command of their spiritual pastors and masters. The true marks of distinction

between the really Christian miracles and all of Popish or heathen manufacture, though subtle, are definite and indelible ; but I never saw them fairly stated. To state them fairly would be to put Christianity on higher grounds than suits the purposes of those who would dictate to conscience in the name of the Church ; it would be too liberal for certain persons, and too deep for the Dissenters. The fears of one party, and the common-sensical stupidity of the other, expose the very foundations of our faith to a cross fire from the Papists and the infidels, while the more philosophic, rather say the more spiritual Christians, satisfied with their own experimental conviction, knowing the truth of Christirinity as they know their own moral responsibility, by a light from on high, give themselves too little trouble about the matter, and do not always intellectually perceive that the miracles are an essential part, not a mere evidence of Christianity.

THE BIDDING PRAYER.

“ The form of bidding prayer was not begun by King Henry, as some have weakly imagined, but was used in the times of Popery, as will appear by the form of bidding the beads in Henry VII.’s time. The way was first for the preacher to name and open his text, and then to call on the people to go to their prayers, and to tell them what they were to pray for: after which all the people said their beads in a general silence, and the minister kneeled down also, and said his.”—*Burnet’s History of Reformation.*

THE omission of the Collects before sermon was a great offence in the Tractarian clergy, and I cannot see why a practice so reverend and edifying, as the

prefacing of preaching with prayer, should be neglected, even if it be not enjoined by any precise canon. The term, bidding prayer, I never heard applied but to the tedious prelude to the St. Mary sermons at Oxford, which would be all the better if performed like the prelude to some of the old plays, in dumb show. The muster-roll of founder and benefactors, Alcandrumque, Heliumque, Noemonaque, Prytanimque, which is shuffled in as a compensation for the prayers and masses in expectation of which many of those founders and benefactors made their foundations and bequests, is as wearisome to the auricular, as offensive to the moral sense. The practice of the old Church, the solemn opening of the text, the call to prayer, the interval of silence, broken only by the dropping of the beads, the occupation of priest and people in one act of mute adoration, must have been exceedingly impressive. The Church of Rome *did* understand these things.

You see few little peasant lasses without beads about their necks ; but how very few of these pretty, curly, sunburnt creatures know that a bead originally meant a prayer ; and was only transferred to the little balls used to reckon prayers, which Southey calls mechanical aids for making fingers and thumbs do the work of devotion. Yet he acknowledged that the rosary is beautiful, whether in the hand or at the girdle, which is more than could be said of the English episcopal wig, whether on the bishop's head or the wig-maker's block. It augurs well for the Church of England that the greater part of her

prelates have discarded these vile uncanonical monstrosities, which had not even antiquity to recommend them, though their seeded-onion appearance might lead a hasty antiquarian to refer them to the idolatry of Egypt; yet the lawn sleeves, the white vesture, with its sable appendages, which I know not how to name, do require some *coiffure* different from the rough, shock, lank or frizzled thatch of lay sconces.

When the Romish tonsure is imitated by a naturally bald crown, as in the venerable and excellent Bishop of Ripon, it is well to let well alone, otherwise I would advise the black skull-cap.

ON BURIAL GROUNDS.

AMONG the least reasonable demands of the Dissenters is the right of burial in parochial church-yards. It was never a wise thing to make a church-yard a cemetery at all, but there are members of the Episcopal communion who attribute a sanctity to Episcopal consecration; attach an importance to a grave in the church-yard, which, though it is unauthorised alike by reason and by Scripture, is too kindly a feeling to be rashly violated. One would not for a small matter offend a prejudice which may smooth the bed of death, and hallow the memory of the dead. But why should a Dissenter, who ascribes no sanctity to church, or church-yard, one of whose charges against the establishment is, that it gives too much countenance to feelings allied to superstition, why should

he desire that his carcase should render insalubrious the atmosphere which so many of his fellow-citizens must breathe weekly or oftener? The sects are rich enough to purchase burial-grounds for themselves. It would, however, be well that there were public cemeteries, unconsecrated, which should be open to all either gratis or on payment of a small fee. Numbers perish under circumstances which make it highly unfit that they should be interred with holy offices, and yet no indignity should be inflicted on the remains of the vilest malefactor. Now the appointment of burial grounds open to all, would prevent the desecration of religious rites, and at the same time avoid any positive stigma on the deceased. It were well, also, that when new churches were erected in the populous parts of cities, no burial-grounds should be attached to them; or, rather, as indeed is often the case, that the cemetery should be at a distance in the outskirts.

Lest these suggestions should be spurned as the crudities of a modern liberal, I will subjoin the words of honest Latimer, the martyr:—

“ I do marvel that London, being so rich a city, hath no burying place without; for, no doubt, it is an unwholesome thing to bury within the city, specially at such time when there be so great sicknesses and many die together. I think, verily, that many a man taketh his death in Paul's church-yard; and this I speak of experience, for I, myself, when I have been there some mornings to hear the sermons, have felt such an ill-favoured, unwholesome savour,

that I was the worse for it a great while after, and I think not but it is the occasion of much sickness and death."

If London was so rich a city in Latimer's day, it is not much poorer now. Some difference there certainly is in the frequency of pestilential diseases, but the good bishop's opinion still holds good in the main.

1835.

ON HOLY THINGS.*

OBLATOIRE: An iron instrument with which the sacramental bread is made. Laud gave great offence to the Puritans, grossly superstitious in their dread of superstition, by directing the solid elements to be cut with a consecrated knife. Now, I hold it most meet and comely, that all places, garments, and instruments, employed in public worship, should be so far holy, as to be exempt from all service to the world; it is well that they should bear a peculiar and significant form, to imitate which, in utensils of common use, is bad taste. Let no one make his nutting-stick like a pastoral staff, or transfer the symbolic ornament of a cathedral to his villa, kennel, pigsty, or latrina. But superstition, yea, idolatry, or worse, conjuration takes place, when these things are revered without a direct and conscious reference to Him, for whose service they are set apart; when they become talismans; when they are believed

* The Note-Books from which this and the following article (on Pews) are taken, might form an interesting contribution to a "General Dictionary of Words and Things."

to work upon body or spirit by any occult or sympathetic virtue; when they are set up as scarecrows to frighten away dæmons; when they are supposed to conciliate grace, or to atone for offence, as sin, or free-will offerings; and when their exhibition is prostituted for the profit or power of any order, regular or secular.

ON PEWS.

BANC, French: a bench, form, sand-bank. They render King's Bench, *Banc du Roi*; *Banc fermé, dans une Eglise*, a pew.

Q. When did pew acquire its ecclesiastical—Arch-deacon Hare would not call it, sacred—signification? The word occurs in Shakspeare, *King Lear*, Act III., Scene 4. Tom of Bedlam complains that the Fiend had laid “knives under his pillow, and halts in his pue.” I am not clear as to the precise meaning of pew in this passage, but Tom does not mean to describe himself as a church-goer. Rather it implies a closet or retiring-room. Neither in French, German, Italian, nor Latin, can I find any word to enable me to guess at the etymology of this poor monosyllable, which some, haply better churchmen than etymologists, or punsters, might fetch from *puer*—the French, not the Roman. Private boxes did not make a fairer pretence for uproar in the never-to-be-forgotten days of O. P., than these private prayer boxes furnish for the more decorous, but not less angry, remonstrances

of the Philarchaists. To make them as odious in High Church eyes as possible, their introduction has been ascribed to the Puritans. I am not deep enough in Church history to know whether this charge is true. But they were a very natural excrescence of the undue predominance of the sitting part of the service, which has survived the troubled times when the pulpit was, what the press is now, the great engine of agitation; and the introductory prayer served the purpose of a gazette; when the Church, in short, rivalled the barbers, the bakers, the smithie and the Rialto, as a news-shop and mart of sedition. I thoroughly revere the zeal of the Anglo-Catholics in restoring prayer—public, united, congregational prayer—to its due eminence among religious duties. I approve of their design to restore to devotion her ancient and comely drapery, so long as the ritual is employed as an aid, not as a substitute for heart-worship; and while no superstitious materialism, no talismanic conjuration, no fetish worship is smuggled under the outward and visible; and while ceremonies are not multiplied to a distracting and burdensome excess. As for pews, they are unquestionably ugly, whether empty or full, they are utterly out of keeping with the style of our old and holiest churches. They make the house of prayer too much of a house of merchandise, and what is worst of all, they are a constant source of bickering and ill will. I never knew a church built or repaired, but that the distribution of the pews set divers individuals, if not the whole parish at loggerheads, causing some to desert the

church altogether, and others to attend it for worse than worldly purposes. Often, too, they exhibit much of the tasteless ostentation of new wealth, and are fitted up with a sybarite self-indulgence, that might seem to arise from a gross misinterpretation of the text of St. Paul (1 Cor. xii. 23), which says that those members of the body which we esteem less honourable, upon those we bestow, (or put on) more abundant honour. A text, mistaken also, by our ancestors, in the days of embroidered brayettes, trunk-hose, and by the ladies of the fashion with their callypygian protuberances. But in removing the evil, much caution will be requisite. Pews have been allowed to become private property, a source of profit both to the Church and to individuals. They are recommended by that love of family privacy, which the English esteem a virtue, and the safeguard of all domestic virtue, but which they are apt to carry to places where it is absurdly out of place,—to holy places where none should seek his own, and to public places, which those who dislike publicity should never frequent at all. Still, people do like to have their families about them in church, which certainly enables them to keep their children in better order; and too many like to see their tenants and servants at a safe distance, which servants at least are very far from objecting to. Should a minister take upon himself to remove or throw open the pews, he would probably be accused of levelling and popularity-hunting; if not, of a covert desire to subvert all rights of property, and it is to be feared,

at least in the larger towns, that many refined persons, especially of the mercantile and manufacturing aristocracy, would leave the parish churches altogether, and set up exclusive places of Sunday pastime, as they have exclusive resorts of week-day dissipation.

The connection of Infidelity with plebeian disaffection, and hostility to established orders, would probably prevent them from entirely discontinuing the forms of public worship; and the imputed vulgarity of dissent, would cause the highly-born and their emulators, to prefer a building where the Liturgy was read, and the minister might be presumed to be a college gentleman. But they would have him more dependent on themselves than on the Church, and would rather admire and criticise his accomplishments, than revere his function. The result would be, an *imperium in imperio*, a rent within the Church much more injurious than a *bonâ fide* separation from it. The deformity must be tolerated till it shall please God to send forth His spirit, in such measure as shall make every congregation as one family, and all congregations as one Church. When this comes to pass (and every Christian may help to accelerate it), the real grounds and meaning of Christian equality, and Christian subordination, will be clearly perceived, and neither jacobinism, nor aristocratism—rather say, neither democratic nor aristocratic jacobinism—will obstruct the edifying of the temple to a faint type of the temple not built with hands.

DUTIES OF A GOVERNMENT, AND RELATION TO
THE CHURCH.*

WE must not expect more from positive institutions than God intended they should produce. You cannot make men moral, enlightened, or religious by law: law has done its best when it prevents the evil-disposed from being mischievous with impunity, and leaves no pretext for any man to take the law into his own hand. The first, not highest, duty of a Government is, to constitute and maintain the State, to defend the national existence and the public honour; the second, to keep the peace at home, to give security to person and property, and to protect religion and morality from insult or oppression; the third, to promote the healthy circulation of property by a well-regulated taxation, and, as far as may be, to prevent individuals from growing rich by making or keeping others poor; to see that private wealth is not increased without a proportionate increase of public wealth. These I hold to contain the sum and substance of the duties of a State—out of which duties arise the just prerogatives of a State, and the just obedience of the subject. No individual, no multitude or combination of individuals, be their rank, education, or usefulness what they may, have any right to set their private will, interest, convenience, humour, or opinion against the will of the State embodied in law; but then law should never represent the will, inclination,

* Extracted from a letter to a friend.

or interest of any individual, or any class, but should be the passionless exponent of practical reason. As to the distribution of powers and functions, it is plainly absurd to lay down any general rule, or to assert the absolute unconditional right of any man or number of men to a legislative voice; but certainly, that does appear to me to be the best condition of society, in which the citizen is never wholly merged in the subject, which gives to every adult, not, indeed, direct political power, but a political existence, a public character—which attributes to every man a something beyond his bare human being. It seems to me a great solecism to allot political privileges or franchises to any man from which others of equal rank, property, adaptation, and education are excluded,—the effect, by the way, of the blundering ten-pound qualification, about the worst that could have been devised. You will understand that I allude to privilege and franchise emanating from and referring to the central government, not to the chartered rights of self-governing bodies, as the Universities and the Church ought to be. With regard to these, it is sufficient that their privileges do not infringe on the common rights of citizenship, far less intermeddle with the imprescriptible duties—duties subjective, and therefore rights objective—of men to their own pure reason and their immortal souls, which are called, I admit, by a very ineligibile phrase, the rights and liberties of conscience. Prerogatives may, and must be, given to certain bodies and certain persons—perhaps are most conveniently given to an

hereditary first magistrate and an hereditary peerage ; but these prerogatives should always be correlative to duties ; should be no larger than the efficient performance of the necessary duties requires. To aristocratic privileges, apart from legislative or conservative functions, I am a decided enemy. In his private capacity the rich man should have nothing more than the poor man, but what he pays for. Sumptuary laws, which confine certain luxuries of dress, diet, amusement, to certain classes, are hateful—they break down the sanctity of home if strictly executed, and if, as in our Universities, they are generally suffered to sleep, they are incentives both to extravagance and to deceit. They degrade and demoralise the trading class, and introduce a hungry, cringing, impudent race of contraband dealers. You yourself would hardly defend privileges which entitle a nobility or clergy to exemption from the common operation of law, which allow, and in a manner encourage, the aristocracy to oppress, wrong, and defraud their inferiors. I believe the odious privileges of the French nobility and clergy to have been a great cause of the ferocity of the French revolution. Little of this kind exists in England. The exemption of the clergy from military service and onerous civil offices, of course, is perfectly right,—and the personal irresponsibility of the King is, perhaps, essential to the monarchy ; but the exemption of real property from the payment of debts seems to me a dishonesty which no experience can justify ; and I see no reason that a peer should be believed on his honour, while

a commoner is impiously required to wager his soul. I rejoiced with the angels in heaven to find that my revered parent thoroughly sympathised with my abhorrence of the present system of administering oaths. I hope all oaths—at least, all but the oaths of witnesses in criminal cases—will be speedily abolished. I hold that no private individual is entitled to disobey or evade a law, simply because he finds it inconvenient to obey it, or because he thinks it unwise or unnecessary, or because he was not himself consulted in the making of it; so long as it does not enjoin what is sinful, or prohibit positive duty, or compromise the natural rights of parents, husbands and wives, &c., or forbid what, though not an absolute duty to all, may be necessary to many, as marriage. But then the law, to claim obedience, must respect matter that is the proper subject of legislation,—matter, in fact, terrene and secular. I am as decidedly for an established and well-endowed Church as you are; but I would have it an independent establishment, a complete self-government,—assoiled from all earthly business, save the care of its own property. I would have the Church polity purely spiritual,—the State policy merely and absolutely secular. I am far enough from a Radical: there is only one point (a mighty one to be sure) in which I do agree with the Radicals,—that religion should never operate as a political disqualification,—that no act of the Church, or any Church, should require a civil sanction, and no act of the State a religious sanction,—that marriage for civil purposes,

as legitimacy of children, &c., should be *bonâ fide* a civil ceremony. I would not certainly admit the performance of marriage by dissenters to be any necessary part of the legal tie. The civil ceremony should be obligatory on all, and all should be at liberty to seek the blessing of the minister where they expect to find it. With marriage, as it is a symbol, a mystery, a moral and religious bond, I hold that the State has nothing to do. As marriage is a matter of decency, the world have a right to a pledge, a visible proof who are and who are not married. It is the business of the State, as far as may be, to prevent sham, clandestine, or very hasty and premature marriages,—to regulate the relations of property and the law of inheritance; but it should never compel the performance of any religious rite, or suffer the civil concerns of any man to be compromised by its own omission of care. The same observations apply to the registration of infants, &c. It is high time for the Church to cast away everything that is merely formal, non-essential, or dubious, and take a firm stand on the vital points of Christianity.

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